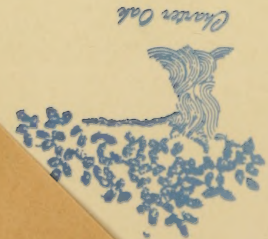


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THE ELEMENTS OF MORAL SCIENCE

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL

BY

NOAH PORTER, D.D., LL.D.

PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE

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THIS VOLUME
IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED BY THE WRITER
TO THE MANY HUNDRED PUPILS WHOM HE HAS INSTRUCTED
FOR NEARLY FORTY YEARS,
SO MANY OF WHOM HAVE BEEN AND ARE STILL HIS
JOY AND PRIDE FOR THEIR FIDELITY
AND ZEAL IN LIVES OF DUTY
AND USEFULNESS.

PREFACE.

THE treatise now offered to the public was written primarily for the use of college and university students in their preparation for the class-room. It supposes some familiarity with psychological and philosophical studies, and a willingness to think closely and earnestly concerning the important questions which relate to man's duties and his moral responsibility. In preparing this volume, the author has endeavored to meet the wants of those students and readers, who, though somewhat mature in their philosophical thinking, and disciplined in their intellectual habits, still require expanded definitions and abundant illustrations, involving more or less of repetition. Had it been his design simply to state and defend his own views of the theory and practice of morals, in a strictly scientific form, he would have written a somewhat different book. It is not, and was not designed to be, in form a scholastic treatise; although it takes cognizance of both the psychological and metaphysical foundations of ethics, and aims to trace all its conclusions to ultimate facts and principles.

For the opinions expressed in this treatise, the treatise itself is responsible; and it must stand or fall with the rea-

sons which are offered in support of its leading positions. Both the opinions, and the grounds of them, are the fruits of more or less reading and reflection; and none of them have been inconsiderately adopted. It is possible that the theory of morals will be thought by some to have been treated with too great fulness and minuteness. But, in the view of the writer, the most, if not all, of these theoretical questions have a more or less directly practical bearing, and are sure to be important in the crises of actual life. For the completeness of this part of the work, a somewhat full and critical exhibition of the progress of ethical speculation is also required. Such an historical sketch the author had intended to furnish, but was deterred by the fear of making his treatise inconveniently large, and was therefore compelled to content himself with a few scanty and incomplete historical notices.

The practical discussions and enforcements may seem to some of his readers to be too long; to others, too brief. The author has aimed to treat all questions of this kind in the light of the principles which underlie them, and to leave to his readers to supply many of the special applications which would naturally suggest themselves. He earnestly hopes that the discussion of many of these practical questions may be a healthful logical and moral discipline to many persons of both sexes, and lead them to invest a life of duty with the dignity and respect which properly belong to it. Especially does he desire that the enforcement of social obligations may awaken in the minds of young persons a more enlightened judgment, a more fervid faith, and a more ardent zeal with respect to those institutions which give to Christendom its organic life.

To one topic he has endeavored to do ample justice, and that is the theoretic import and value of the Christian ethics, — a topic which seems to him to have been surprisingly neglected by English writers, notwithstanding that the English literature is so abundant in ethical treatises, the most of which were written by Christian theologians, and from the standpoint of supernatural Christianity. While the author has scrupulously avoided urging its claims to superiority from any higher than its human excellence and human authority, he sees no reason why the New Testament should not be fairly considered, in regard to its ethical rank and significance, by the side of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *De Officiis*, Butler's *Sermons*, or Spencer's *Data of Ethics*.

With these remarks, the treatise is commended to the favorable judgment of thoughtful readers, at a time and in a country when and where ethical questions ought to be seriously considered, wisely answered, and fearlessly applied to public and private life.

NOAH PORTER.

YALE COLLEGE, January, 1885.

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THE ELEMENTS OF MORAL SCIENCE.

INTRODUCTORY.

§ 1. MORAL SCIENCE is the science of duty ; i.e., the science which defines, regulates, and enforces duty. This definition is preliminary and inadequate, as every definition must be which is given at the beginning of a treatise. A satisfactory and adequate definition of any science can only be attained by an exhaustive discussion of the subject-matter of which it treats. For this reason it should be looked for at the end, rather than at the beginning, of our inquiries. The definition with which we begin is seldom that which a more extensive knowledge of the subject requires and justifies. “As much, therefore, as is to be expected from a definition placed at the commencement of a subject, is that it should define the scope of our inquiries.” — J. STUART MILL : *Logic*, Introductory, § 1.

Moral Science defined. Definition provisional and imperfect.

Moral Science, or the Moral Sciences, are not infrequently used in a wider sense as synonymous with psychological or speculative science or sciences, for the reason that these are referred to or assumed in Moral Science proper as furnishing the facts, principles, or methods, one or all, on which Moral Science rests, or which it presupposes. This

Popular use of the term.

broader and more general use of the term is, however, not likely to mislead any except superficial thinkers.

As a science, Moral Science proposes to give the results of careful observations, subtle and exhaustive analyses, clear and complete definitions, verified inductions, logical deductions, in the form of a consistent, articulated, and finished system.

The scientific knowledge of duty at which we aim, also supposes that there is a so-called popular knowledge which is already possessed and made secure (cf. *The Human Intellect*, § 435). Duty is a subject-matter which all men acknowledge and believe in, and of which all men think more or less. All men adopt principles of duty which are more or less correct and comprehensive. All men accept rules of duty for themselves and others which are more or less satisfying and sacred. The transition from common to scientific knowledge may be less abrupt in this than in many other cases; but it does not follow, for this reason, that it is less desirable to effect it. It may be even more important, because of the greater liability of men to careless thinking and investigation in the treatment of themes with which they imagine themselves to be familiar.

Every science is also capable of being applied as an art to some kind of activity for which it furnishes the rules. This is conspicuously true of logic and æsthetics, which, by means of scientific analyses, devise and justify practical rules for the direction of our thinking and reasoning, and the exercise and improvement of our sense of the beautiful and sublime. In a certain sense, both logic and æsthetics present rules for right conduct; but this is pre-eminently true of Moral Science, inasmuch as it assumes the control of every description of human activity, so far as it can be modified by the human will under the influence of the highest motives. The results of its scientific knowledge can be applied to the direction of human conduct and the improvement of human character, to the well-being of the individual

Scientific
supposes a
popular
knowledge.

Also a practical
application.

and the community, in almost every conceivable variety of circumstances. Moral Science, as a system of well-grounded rules of human character and conduct, is justly esteemed one of the most important of studies, for the simple reason that questions of duty present themselves to all men, in all circumstances; and the consequences of correctly answering these questions are of the utmost practical importance.

§ 2. Duty is the subject-matter of Moral Science. *But what is duty?* We reply in general, and provisionally, Duty in the concrete is an action, or collection of actions, which ought to be done: in the abstract, it is the quality or relation which is common to and distinguishes such actions. What is duty?

We do not undertake at present to enumerate or designate these actions. We give no definition or theory of the quality which belongs to them. We do not assert that this is the only relation or property which belongs to the acts in question: we simply recognize it as the one quality, among others, which is designated by the term "duty" in every action which is owed or due, and which may be claimed or enforced.

The term "action," as used in the foregoing definition, is obviously not limited to corporeal or external actions, as a word or blow, or even a gesture or look, nor indeed to any bodily movement or effect whatever, independently of the intentions; but it also includes the inner activities, as a wish, or desire, or purpose, whether these are, or are not, made manifest by word or deed. Sense in which action is used.

Nor is the term, when thus applied, limited to single and transient states. It may also be applied to those continued or permanently active conditions of the man which we call his *character*, his *disposition*, and *habits*, so far as these admit the relation of moral obligation or moral quality. In Moral Science psychical activities and states are esteemed of no less consequence than any other, if, indeed, they do not constitute its proper sphere. Includes the character and habits.

Moral Science treats of actions as they *ought to be*, not of phenomena or acts as they are: it is therefore a science of *the ideal* as truly as of *the actual*. It is true, it founds its conclusions, in respect to what ought to be, upon its discoveries of what actually is. It founds its ideal rules, and proposes its ideal aims, upon a solid basis of fact. It is not in the least romantic, but severe and critical. It inquires what a moral agent is, in his constitution, in order to determine how he ought to choose and feel and act; but the conclusions which it derives from these observations of fact are conclusions respecting what ought to be, not what actually occurs. Hence, though ideal in its aims and rules, it is founded on fact and observation. It investigates the moral constitution of man, and, so far, is an inductive science. Like other inductive sciences, it interprets man's capacities in the light of those intuitions which are essential to scientific knowledge, finding in facts and intuitions its principles and rules. Within this sphere it is strictly and severely an inductive science. So far as it derives conclusions from these presumed data as to what man ought to be and to do, so far it is an ideal, a pure or hypothetical science, and is akin to formal logic and the pure mathematics. So far, however, as it adjusts its rules of external conduct to the lessons of experience, so far is it affiliated with *the applied mathematics* in accommodating its ideal rules to the modifying influence of other forces and laws.

§ 3. Should it be asked on what grounds we assume that duty is a reality, or that the conception of moral obligation is not a fiction, we reply, —

Grounds for believing duty to be a reality, or at least worthy our study. (1) Duty is universally believed to be a reality. The presence of this relation to all men, and their assent to its authority in some form, are rarely denied. All men acknowledge, with rare exceptions, that they owe certain duties to certain of their fellow-men. All men insist, without an exception, that their fellow-men owe some duties to themselves.

(2) The conception of duty is not only universally and tenaciously held, but it is esteemed of the highest rank and supreme importance. It arouses the strongest feelings of our nature, and exacts the most costly sacrifices. It awakens the most moving hopes and fears. It has played the most conspicuous rôle in human history. Literature and art acknowledge its presence and agency as one of the noblest elements of their attractiveness and their power. Moral grandeur and moral beauty are confessed to be the most elevating and attractive forms of grandeur and beauty. For all these reasons, it deserves to be carefully examined, to be exactly defined, and thoroughly grounded and verified.

(3) Even if the conception of duty is supposed to be unreal, while yet it is so universally received and confided in, it is the more important that it should be carefully scrutinized, in order that its groundlessness may be satisfactorily exposed, and the speculative and practical errors which have been caused by faith in its truth and sacredness may be effectually dispelled and shunned.

§ 4. We assume that duty is a reality, and is worthy of scientific examination. Following *the analytic method*, we find that the following inquiries and methods of investigation naturally suggest themselves to our thoughts, giving the several forms or subdivisions of Moral Science.

The analytic method gives the divisions of Moral Science. (1) Ethics, or classified rules of practice.

(1) A single act is to be performed or avoided; as, for example, with respect to a parent, a friend, or a benefactor. We are taught, or we believe, that we ought to do or avoid such an act because it is, or is not, one of the duties which we owe to a parent, a friend, or a benefactor, or, it may be, to our country or a suffering fellow-man. Such instruction or enforcement assumes that it is conceded that we ought to perform certain duties to these several classes of persons, and that these duties may be defined or determined. But we may never have inquired why these classes of duties are

morally binding. We may have simply been taught, by those in whose wisdom we confide, that all these classes of duties are obligatory, and yet have never reflected on the facts or reasons by which they are enforced. The propositions given in answer seem to require no proof, they seem to be self-evident perhaps, or they have been accepted from childhood as true and binding. We may assent to them on the authority of persons older and wiser than ourselves, or as the commands of the Supreme. It is enough that we accept the truth that we owe certain duties to parents, benefactors, or friends, or to God, and that the act in question comes under the rule.

The arrangement of duties after such a method, upon a basis of simple authority, is the first step towards their scientific classification and enforcement. Such an arrangement may properly enough be called "the Ethical," and its product "Ethics."

The term "Ethics" is often used as a synonym of Moral Science. As its etymology indicates, it was originally applied to manners. The epithet "Moral" is similarly derived, indeed; but the phrases "Moral Science," "Moral Philosophy," have acquired a somewhat profounder signification. It is also true that Ethics is sometimes, in good English usage, distinguished as theoretical and practical; but this usage is not frequent. The term "Ethics" more commonly suggests what may be called arranged or classified rules of conduct or behavior, as given for practical convenience, exclusive of any reference to fundamental principles or scientific grounds.

Under Ethics Casuistry appears as a special branch of the science of conduct: i.e., as a system of rules for the decision of what are called cases of conscience, under what is called a conflict of duties, or a case of perplexity or doubt in which it is not clear what our duty is; more frequently under an apparent incompatibility between duties of one class and duties of another, as between duties to family relatives and benefactors, or duties to our-

Ethics includes Casuistry.

selves and duties to our fellow-men, or duties to our country and duties to God.

(2) The scientific thinker is not likely to be content with the ethical classification or explanation of duties.

He rises to more comprehensive, or penetrates to more profound, inquiries; e.g., Why do we owe the duties specified, or any duties, to parents, friends, or benefactors? What characteristic is there, which is common to these classes of actions, which makes them sacred and obligatory? How is this common characteristic defined and enforced? What are the fundamental principles in respect to human action from which all special and subordinate rules are derived? Inquiries like these introduce us to *Moral Science* proper, or the scientific treatment of duty.

Moral Science again admits a twofold division, — into the *psychological* and the *philosophical*. The one distinguishes and defines the psychical capacities which are the foundation of moral activity and the moral relations: the other defines and arranges the conceptions, and justifies and adjusts the principles, which are required for the conclusions and laws of Moral Science.

Of these, the psychological method is first in time. That a knowledge of psychical phenomena and of the spiritual nature of man is essential to the scientific knowledge of duty, is obvious. Moral activities can be performed and moral responsibilities acknowledged only by moral persons. Not actions of every description are judged to be moral, but those only which are wrought by a person who by his constitution is competent to perform them, and whose circumstances qualify him to originate them. But who is a moral person? What are the endowments which are essential to moral activity, and what are the circumstances which are the conditions of moral responsibility? To ascertain these facts of human nature, to distinguish them carefully, to trace their history and origination, to show their mutual rela-

(2) *Moral
Science
proper.*

Involves
psychology
of the moral
powers.

tions and their place in what we may call the moral experiences of man, are the necessary prerequisites to Moral Science. Such an observation of phenomena or facts is the essential chronological condition to any scientific knowledge of morality. It is equally indispensable to the intelligent application of the principles and rules of science to the needs of individuals and communities, on the one hand; and, on the other, to the definition and justification of the general rules of practice. In point of fact, the analysis of the moral faculties or endowments of man has uniformly been acknowledged to be an essential element or condition of Moral Science. The discussions in this science are very largely discussions of the actual operations of the human soul, when required to settle moral questions, or occupied with the feelings and purposes which attend the performance or the violation of duty.

(3) Prominent among these psychological inquiries are those which relate to the nature and the theory of *conscience*; e.g., What is its relation to the other endowments of man? Is it a faculty by itself, or only the universally recognized human personality when applied in a special form and to a special subject-matter? Whence, and what, and how extensive, is its authority? Can it be educated? Can it be improved? Can it be destroyed? What place does it hold in respect to custom, tradition, to prevailing opinion, to civil legislation, or to a supposed or actual supernatural revelation? These, and other questions in respect to the conscience, are chiefly questions of fact, and, as such, questions of psychology.

(4) But Moral Science does not rest on psychology alone: it also supposes and becomes a philosophy. To science of any kind, certain axioms or fundamental principles are necessary prerequisites. Whether these principles are original and self-evident, or whether they are derived from experience, reasoning, or association, they must be assumed and asserted in order to any scientific deduction or enforcement. This is especially true of any sci-

(3) Involves
a theory of
conscience.

(4) Psychol-
ogy carries
us to a phil-
osophy.

tific knowledge of man, and pre-eminently of his moral constitution, for the reason that any thorough or critical study of the moral processes and moral judgments carries us back to those conceptions and truths which are fundamental to all knowledge, and pre-eminently to all philosophy. It forces us to inquire whether the so-called moral axioms and intuitions stand by themselves, as an independent group, co-ordinate with those of the pure intellect, or whether they are resolved into those intuitions which are common to all the scientific judgments, and are fundamental to every form of science.

The relation of Moral Science to psychology and philosophy has always been most intimate. The history of every period of human activity attests the fact that the psychology and metaphysics of individuals and generations of men have, in fact, modified and determined their views of Moral Science. The Ethics have followed the philosophy and psychology by a natural and necessary consequence, more or less rapidly at different times, but invariably with a logical and inevitable sequence. A materialistic or atheistic or agnostic philosophy must inevitably result in a superficial or inconsistent ethical system, and either weaken or mislead the sensibilities and judgments of duty in respect to the Family, the State, and the Kingdom of God.

§ 5. *Reversing the order of our inquiries*, we give the results of our analysis in the following *synthetic statement* of the principal divisions of Moral Science.

(1) We begin with Moral Science proper, or a scientific treatment of the unquestioned facts, and the fundamental conceptions and principles, which are involved in the moral relations and phenomena. Such a treatment necessarily involves a correct Metaphysical or Speculative theory of those relations which are essential to every form of science, including those relations which man and the universe hold to the Self-existent and the Infinite.

Synthetic
method
changes the
order, and
gives us (1)
Moral Science
proper,
including
psychology.

Such a science also presupposes and requires a correct and comprehensive Psychology of those powers of man which are concerned in his moral activities and experiences. It also, by a necessary corollary, gives us a correct theory of the Conscience, with the appropriate practical directions in respect to its education, authority, and guidance.

(2) Moral Science naturally and necessarily becomes Ethics so soon as from these principles and facts it derives those special and secondary principles and axioms of duty, which, when applied, become the rules or directions which are required for the regulation of human conduct. A system of rules of human conduct, when founded on well-grounded reasons, gives us Ethics, which prominently recognizes the leading relations of man as an individual and social being, as permanently connected by fixed conditions with nature and with God, and as consequently capable of culture, science, and religion.

(3) Ethics implies a *science of human Rights*, so far as duties to be performed require certain permanent and well-secured conditions of human activity and progress ; which man is not only permitted, but morally required under certain limitations, to assert, and secure to himself.

(4) Inasmuch as duties seem often to conflict, and to assert incompatible claims, Casuistry arises, or the science of conflicting duties, which furnishes the principles and rules by which these apparent conflicts may be adjusted.

(5) Inasmuch, also, as the duties of men are illustrated by the examples, and enforced by the motives, or inculcated in the precepts, of Christianity, we have *Christian Ethics*.

These topics comprehend the several divisions into which Moral Science may be developed, and under which it may be separately treated, according to the individual tastes and method of the writer. It is sufficient for our design to divide

our treatise into Moral Science as a theory, and as a guide for conduct, or, briefly, into Moral Science and Ethics.

§ 6. The importance and dignity of this study will appear from the following considerations : —

(1) Duty is a legitimate and worthy object of scientific inquiry. Truths of duty constantly present themselves for man's assent and faith. The precepts of duty perpetually require his obedience or sacrifice. Motives of duty never cease to inspire his love and devotion. Questions of duty every day task his understanding, or distract his conscience.

The study important. (1) The subject-matter legitimate.

Duty, moreover, is esteemed by most men to be of the highest consequence. It excites the warmest emotions of hope or fear, of love or hate, of self-complacence or remorse. It exacts the most costly sacrifices of wealth, of the good opinion of others, and of life itself. So far as duty is capable of scientific analysis and justification, in order that our doubts may be resolved, our inquiries answered, our zeal rekindled, or our actions guided, it deserves to be investigated with a thorough and patient scientific spirit.

(2) The science of duty is necessary as a preparation for professional and public life. The principles and rules of duty are fertile and never-failing themes for discussion by educated men. They will never cease to be enforced upon the attention of men in public life by their fellows and by public men upon their generation. Every man whom we shall meet in life will have some claim to urge or some demand to assert. Every social organization, from the family of the household to the great family of mankind, asserts rights which can only be responded to by some duty acknowledged or disowned. Every community and association has its code of duty, and its tribunal at which its laws are enforced, its rewards are allotted, or its penalties are exacted. Every form of civil government supposes manifold duties to be owed and confessed by its citizens. Even those

(2) Especially for professional and public men.

movements which seem to be anti-social, and destructive of social order, are aroused by appeals to some sense of duty or some claim of right. They more commonly profess to be pre-eminently ethical in their reasonings and appeals. Combinations, strikes, seditions, and revolutions are usually aroused by some real or imagined violation of rights. They are kindled by some professed call of duty, or are justified by some actual or fancied wrong. Judicial tribunals of every grade are constantly trying questions which concern the rights and the consequent duties of men. The argument of every lawyer, the charge of every judge, the verdict of every jury, the sentence of every culprit, supposes some principle in Moral Science either asserted or derived, some rule of Ethics that is obeyed or dishonored, some sensibility to right or wrong that is followed or offended, some obligation that is acknowledged or violated.

Every educated man who assumes the function of teaching or leading his fellow-men finds that one of his principal functions is to discuss and enforce propositions of duty. Clergymen, jurists, publicists, political leaders, teachers, writers, and journalists are, by the nature of their office, expounders of Moral Science. It is true, they may seem to themselves and to others to have no faith in duty. They may think themselves successful in their doubts and denials in respect to its reality; but such denials and questionings only respect certain of its forms and relations. They may reduce duty to very narrow limits, and derive it from a very ignoble origin, and enforce it by very unworthy motives; but no man in public life, no teacher or leader of men, would ever think of denying every form of duty, or cease to use the nomenclature of Ethics. For these reasons a scientific knowledge of the foundations and precepts of duty would seem to be a necessary prerequisite for the discharge of the special functions of most of the leaders of society, and masters of the opinions of their fellow-men. Every such person holds and expounds a true or a false, a profound or superficial, theory of morals.

Every educated man must discuss questions of duty.

(3) The study of Moral Science is practically useful. Its natural and almost necessary tendency is to lead men to think of duty, and consequently to believe in duty. If duty is the solid and sacred thing which it claims to be, then it will bear the closest scrutiny. Not only will it endure this, but the more thoroughly it is examined, the more solid will be its grounds, and the more binding its claims. It is true, speculative studies have their exposures. Science may be pursued in a narrow or a dishonest spirit, and seem to lead to superficial and dangerous conclusions; but the legitimate ends and efforts of science are truth, made more evident to the inquirer in proportion to the fidelity of his researches and the breadth of his views. The worst of all possible scepticisms in the thinking man is the distrust of thorough and bold investigation. The most dangerous enemy of duty is the man who dissuades from an exhaustive examination of its grounds and claims in the light of scientific insight and with the widest possible range of inquiry. No man is so faithless to duty in fact, whatever his intentions may be, as he who loses faith in its capacity to meet and endure the severest scrutiny of scientific thought.

(3) The study
leads to faith
in duty.

Moreover, the scientific study of duty must keep pace with the attention given to the scientific investigation of other forms of truth. A man who has been trained to scientific habits in any department of thought, or upon whatever subject-matter, will of course apply these habits in all his thinking. He will require that every conclusion which he accepts shall have been viewed in its scientific relations — more or less profoundly. He must justify to his reflective and matured reason every truth and fact which is liable to be called in question. There may be facts and principles, indeed, which he does not need thus to examine and justify; but this is not true of the facts and rules of duty. These he must either receive or deny, he must either apply or neglect them, and he must do both intelligently. These truths must also take their place before his intellect, by the

side of those other facts and truths which his scientific thinking has accepted. If he fails thus to connect them with his highest and most careful thinking, he cannot give them the assent of his highest and best intelligence, nor the homage of his most enlightened confidence. He may retain his faith in duty and in conscience, but his faith will by no means be so clear and satisfactory as had it been justified to and by his best intellectual activities. His zeal and fervor for the right will lack nerve and confidence, and may collapse from intellectual weakness, or evaporate into a harmless or dangerous fanaticism.

(4) Moral Science is also often needed as a guide to correct answers to practical questions of duty. It is often (4) **Practi-** said and believed, by men of high authority, that **cally useful.** Moral Science is of little or no practical use in critical or doubtful circumstances, being oftener a hinderance than a help. An honest intention, it is argued, and an ingenuous mind, are more efficient to lead men to a wise judgment than the most enlarged acquaintance with the history of ethical theories or the acutest examination of ethical principles.

We concede, that, so far as the intentions and aims of men are concerned, Moral Science can be of no special **Especially** service, because all men are or may be sufficiently **on critical** informed as to the right and the wrong of their **occasions.** purposes and desires. But when a question is raised in respect to the external actions; when men ask, not what they should desire or purpose, but what they should actually do, — then the utmost wisdom is often required which Moral Science can furnish. This wisdom will take the form of a clear statement of solid and well-considered fundamental principles, of a familiar acquaintance with the nature of man, of sagacious inductions from the tendency of the actions which we are to do or avoid, and of a wise forecast of the future, grounded on the largest experiences of the past. But all these are the results of the training and knowledge which Moral Science imparts.

Standards of duty are like standards of time. In the ordi-

nary exigencies of life, when no special exactness is required, the kitchen clock, or an imperfectly adjusted and not over-accurate watch, will answer. But if we are to determine the longitude, and need to know it within a fraction of a mile, in order to determine in which direction we must steer if we would avoid a reef, or escape a promontory, then we need the best-made and the best-adjusted chronometer that solid science can furnish, or instructed art can employ.¹

(5) Moral Science is not superfluous, but is the more necessary for those who accept a supernatural revelation of duty. It may be said or thought, that whenever the principles or rules of duty are fixed and declared by authority, whether human or divine, the necessity of any scientific study of either is superseded. There is no room for science, it is urged, in respect to principles which are settled, and rules which are prescribed.

(5) Moral
Science not
superseded
by a super-
natural reve-
lation.

To this it may be replied, that the so-called principles of duty which are revealed to man are not principles in the scientific sense, but are usually practical maxims or comprehensive directions which respect the feelings and conduct. Even these, however, imply an underlying philosophy of facts and relations. To develop and state these philosophical truths is the special function of Moral Science, and is as much needed with respect to revealed as to natural Ethics, and perhaps more; forasmuch as the revealed Ethics must of necessity, and therefore of divine wisdom, be taught in popular language, and after a logic which excludes scientific exactness or systematic completeness. To give these truths the form and authority of science, to translate them into the conceptions and terms of the schools, and to enforce them by their logic, Moral Science is required.

Moreover, the maxims or practical principles by which

¹ This illustration was suggested by the observation of Coleridge, that "the conscience bears the same relation to God as an accurate time-piece bears to the sun." — *The Friend*, Miscellany the First, essay iv.

morality is taught in the Scriptures must of necessity be very general. Morality could not possibly be taught for the human race by any other method. To provide a collection of specific, or even of very general directions for every possible exigency of human existence, would be impossible. The definite rules required to meet the needs of a single individual for a week or a month, if fully written out, would fill a volume, if not a score of volumes. The needs of ordinary and extraordinary life are also very different. Certain principles laid down, and rules provided, might, perhaps, be easily applied to the occasions of ordinary experience; but, so soon as any case becomes doubtful or difficult, not only must the underlying principle be clearly understood, precisely stated, and carefully guarded, but the present exigency must be shown to be similar to the occasion for which the truth or precept was originally uttered. In ordinary life nothing more may be needed to interpret and apply the Ethics of the New Testament than common sense and common honesty. But if a case is doubtful, and the circumstances are complicated, the profoundest reflection and the clearest knowledge may be required to interpret the ethical import of the inspired teachings, when these are to be applied to a perplexed question or a tangled controversy.

(6) The study of Moral Science is favorable to faith in the Christian revelation. The most decisive evidence of the truth and authority of this revelation is furnished by its moral import, and its adaptation to the moral nature and necessities of man. To feel the force of this argument, and even to understand its import, one must first do justice to the facts on which it rests: i.e., to the moral nature and wants of man, on the one hand, as furnishing the occasion for a revelation; and to the moral import of Christianity, on the other, as adapted to these wants. The study of Moral Science holds the attention to both these data, or terms of argument, in such a way as to lead us to believe in the reality, and appreciate the significance, of both. So far as

(6) Is favorable to faith in the Christian revelation.

it is favorable to belief in duty and to an intelligent and reflective appreciation of its importance, so far must it prepare the mind to judge justly and to measure practically the adaptation to man's moral needs of a revelation, the most decisive argument for which is, that it could never have originated in the invention, or the aspirations or fancies of man alone.

PART I.

THE THEORY OF DUTY.

CHAPTER I.

MAN A MORAL PERSON, PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED.

§ 7. WE may assume that moral relations or qualities pertain only to moral persons and to their actions or character, their dispositions, thoughts, feelings, and words. We inquire then, first of all, who is a moral person, and what are the capacities and faculties which constitute such a person? — What endowments qualify him for moral activity and its responsibilities? Following the order of topics already suggested, we begin with the *psychological analysis of man's moral constitution or personality*.

Some conceive these endowments to be special, and additional to those by which the other functions of human nature are performed. They represent to themselves and others certain so-called moral endowments, as superadded to the intellect, sensibility, and will, with the other recognized human powers, like a separate attachment or gearing to a machine, or as special organs in a plant or animal. To this special nature they assign the moral experiences as separate and quasi-independent functions, even though these may be conceived to interact with the inferior powers by some unexplained connection whenever man acts morally. In effect they assume or imply that man might be a completely furnished human being, and yet be incapable of moral judgments and feelings, and consequently conceive that the endowments which make him moral might be alternately attached or withdrawn, suspended or brought into action, leaving him essentially a man, whether with or without them. Some make this moral

faculty to be the originator of special ideas, which they name the “moral reason,” as an inlet or discernor of moral relations or conceptions. Others conceive it as a special sensibility called the “moral sense,” originating certain feelings from or by which these relations are intellectualized. Others deny that there is any special moral faculty or faculties, but hold that man’s moral nature designates the whole of man’s conscious psychical endowments when applied to a special subject-matter, and employed in special modes of activity. They contend that man’s moral personality is an essential consequent of his complete and developed manhood, and that the two cannot be conceived as separable. This is the doctrine of this treatise.

This question, however, need not be discussed at the outset.

Moral experiences involve man’s three-fold powers.

It cannot be decided at the beginning of our inquiries, but must be reserved for the progress of our analysis, and be developed as its result. The consciousness of all men, however, attests so much

as this, which indeed all men are ready to avow, — that the powers of *feeling*, *will*, and *intellect*, are concerned in all the moral phenomena. The theories of all philosophers concede or assert that each one of these human endowments or faculties plays a more or less conspicuous part in man’s moral experiences. Whether any other faculty is required to account for these phenomena, and the relations and feelings which they involve, will appear from a thorough psychological analysis of the phenomena themselves, and the consideration of the function or *rôle* which each of these usually recognized human faculties fulfils in man’s moral life.

§ 8. We begin this analysis with *the Sensibility, or the capacity in man for feelings and desires.*

The sensibilities are often called the “active powers,” that is, the act-impelling powers, also “the springs of action,” because they impel to activities of every kind. The exercise of a sensibility or the capacity for feeling, at least when in voluntary or active energy, is also

The sensibility, other appellations for.

the object of moral approval or disapproval; that is, it is recognized as morally good or bad. Hence the sensibilities, or feelings, are called *moral* as well as *active* powers.

An act or state of the sensibilities is distinguished from an act of the intellect by the following features:—

(1) It is purely *subjective*, being wholly confined to the soul which experiences it. In an intellectual act, the man always apprehends an object, which he distinguishes from himself, the knowing agent, even when the object is created by himself and exists for himself; i.e., whether the object known is a *subject-object* or an *object-object*. An act or state of feeling, on the other hand, is altogether *subjective*.

Act of, distinguished from the intellect. (1) Subjective.

(2) The act of feeling is dependent on an act of intellect for the object which excites it. This is obviously and confessedly true of all the higher and the fully developed feelings. The law is universal, that to the exercise of any such emotion some object must be apprehended by the intellect which is fitted to excite and maintain it. The truth of this law is attested by the testimony of experience, that, if we would cease to be interested in any object, we must withdraw our attention from it; and by the kindred rule, that the strength or energy of our feelings, other things being equal, is proportioned to the intensity and exclusiveness of the occupation of the intellect with the exciting object. It is not asserted that any period of time must elapse between the conscious act of knowing and the conscious act of feeling. The dependence is causal, not chronological, as in other like cases in which real relations are discerned without the conscious lapse of time.

(2) Dependent on the intellect.

A possible exception to this precedence of intellectual apprehension to the emotional experience might be urged in the case of the bodily sensations, not a few urging that to the intellectual act of sense-perception the experience of sensation proper is the essential pre-condition. If this

A possible exception.

exception be allowed, it would not overturn the testimony of our conscious experience in respect to the conditions of emotion proper, confirmed as it is by the practical rules which are uniformly acknowledged in respect to the control of the feelings by applying or withdrawing the attention.

We must distinguish, also, between the knowledge that something is, and the knowledge of *what it is*. To a large extent the knowledge of the second description pertains to those relations to the sensibility, which, as known, are the conditions of the re-excitement of the same.

Others contend that before the development of definite, and, so to speak, intellectualized or intelligent emotions, these must be preceded by rudimentary impulses or instincts which are emotional in their nature. Were this allowed, it would not set aside the truth that in the emotions proper, and to the developed mind, an intellectual apprehension is essential as the pre-condition of the renewed subjective experience. That this is true of all the positive and conscious feelings, is obvious from the circumstance that the character of these emotions in different individuals is determined altogether by the complicated and often remote relations which the intellect discerns of the same object at different times. How a man feels with respect to an object of interest must depend upon what he *finds in it*, or *knows of it*. The pleasure or pain which any object can give, whether it be an object of sense, or fancy, or fact, having few or manifold relations, or whether it be a recondite scientific truth or principle, must depend on the capacity of the mind to discern its capabilities when experienced or thought of, to please or offend the sensibility.

(3) The third characteristic of an emotional experience is, that it is uniformly either pleasurable or painful.

(3) Uniformly pleasant or painful. The pleasure or pain may be feeble in energy. Either may be so weak as to seem scarcely distinguished from the other, and consequently may be pronounced

indifferent by comparison with the more positive experiences that resemble it in kind; but it is not conceivable that what we call a feeling or emotion should not take some low form at least, of the subjectively painful or pleasant.

The appellations for the capacity of feeling and its various acts and states are few and indefinite. *The sensibility, the appetites, the sensitivity, the desires, the active, motive, or emotional powers, the capacity of feeling and the heart,* designate the capacity. *The sensations, the feelings, the affections, the sensibilities, the desires, the passions, the emotions, the sentiments,* are used for the exercises or experiences of the power, — either for the whole or special classes, with much indefiniteness. For both power and act the nomenclature is singularly defective in technical precision, and fixedness of application. The limited and shadowy character of the terminology of the sensibilities is a natural consequence of the comparatively little attention which this class of psychical phenomena has received from the psychologist, in whatever way this may be explained.

Appellations
for power,
acts, and
states.

§ 9. *Two elements are distinguishable in every exercise of the sensibility, — the emotion proper, and its attendant desire. The law is universal, every feeling, whether pleasurable or painful, is no sooner experienced than it awakens a desire that the pleasure may be continued or the pain may terminate. “Even in joy* itself, that which keeps up the action whereon the enjoyment depends, is the desire to continue it, and the fear to lose it” (LOCKE: *Essay*, book ii. chap. 21, § 39). If the feeling is remembered or expected, it awakens a desire that the pleasure may be experienced or the pain may be averted. The two are elements of one apparently indivisible experience, one element passing into the other by a transition quicker than thought can trace, and under a connection which analysis cannot discriminate as *before* and *after*. The element of feeling proper is purely subjective, in which the soul is a receiver or sufferer.

The element
of desire dis-
tinguished
from the ele-
ment of emo-
tion proper.

The desire also is subjective in so far as it is occupied with the pleasurable subjective condition which it would retain, or the painful condition which it would exclude or avoid. So soon, however, as any object, whether *subject-object* or *object-object*, is known, or recognized as the cause or occasion of the pleasure or pain, the object itself is desired or repelled. Speaking more exactly, as the experience has two elements, each of these elements has its correspondent object or condition set over against itself as its exciting occasion or cause.¹ *The object of the feeling*

Object of each
of these ele-
ments.

proper is that agent, be it a thing, or be it a thought, imagination or memory, which is capable of exciting the sensibility to a pleasurable or painful affection.

The capacity of this object to cause this, and the effect itself, are ultimate facts. Thus light, sound, intellectual activity, the society or sympathy of others, the happiness of others, — each gives pleasure to the sense or soul. *The object of the desire that springs out of the feeling*, experienced or thought of, is the feeling itself, whether pleasurable or painful, and whether the desire is an appetite or aversion. This object is purely subjective, but it is the primary object on which the desire directly terminates. Its secondary or mediate object is its occasion or cause, whether it be *subject-object* or *object-object*, so soon and so far as it suggests or excites that affection which is the primary and proper object of the attendant desire. Inasmuch as we do not often have occasion to distinguish between the two elements of the subjective experience, it is not surprising that the primary and secondary objects of desire should not always be distinguished, and are frequently interchanged with one another in thought and language.

Thus it is said by Dugald Stewart: “As the object of hunger is not happiness, but food, so the object of curiosity is not happiness, but knowledge. . . . Our appetites can with no

¹ In the German language, *Empfindung* is appropriated to the purely subjective element, whether painful or pleasant.

propriety be called *selfish*, for they are directed to their respective objects as ultimate ends, and they must all have operated, *in the first instance*, prior to any experience of the pleasure arising from their gratification" (*Active and Moral Powers*, book i. chap. i.). In each of these two sentences it is obvious that "the object" is used in one of the two senses referred to.

Some writers use the term "desire" to designate a limited or special class of the sensibilities, and thereby un-
Special use of
"desire."
designedly sanction the inference that the element of desire is limited to these affections, or at least is conspicuous in their exercise. Thus Dugald Stewart (*Active and Moral Powers*, Introduction) divides the active principles into five classes, — appetites, *desires*, affections, self-love, and the moral faculty, — implying that the element of desire is limited to one only of the five. In his subsequent reasoning, moreover, he expressly excludes desire from the affections and the moral faculty. This classification is not uncommon, the *desires* being restricted to a class of the sensibilities which are concerned with objects that are intermediate between the material on the one hand, and the personal on the other, as *desire of property, power, esteem*, etc. This special limitation of the affection of desire, and the term "desire," is sanctioned by many writers with the mistaken and misleading inference to which we have referred.

§ 10. The correctness of our analysis of desire is affirmed and attested by the consciousness of every person who reflects upon his own psychical states. It is also confirmed by the language which is unconsciously used to give expression to these states. Not unfrequently this language leaves almost, if not altogether, out of view, the object that conditionates or stimulates the subjective emotion proper, and emphasizes this emotion as pleasurable or painful, and this only. Thus the friend says to the friend whom he loves most disinterestedly, "I am

Conscious-
ness attests
the analysis
given of emo-
tion and de-
sire.

most happy to be in your society, or to forego my pleasure for your sake." The compassionate soul expresses his own unselfish sympathy in terms which describe only his own subjective pain: "Your suffering fills me with grief." The patriot says, "*Dulce . . . pro patria mori.*" The lover exclaims, "Can I be so blest?" the devout, "I delight to do thy will, O God!" In most of these expressions the disinterestedness of the affection is emphasized paradoxically, as it were,—by making prominent the subjective pleasure of the affection as a measure of the strength of its attendant desire.

If we ask, in the case of each of these persons, why the object, be it a person, thing, or thought, pleases or displeases, we can give no answer, except that his nature, originally or by habit, is such as spontaneously to respond with pleasure or pain to its presence and its activity. Moreover, we judge of the original or acquired capabilities and tastes of a man by the objects which please or displease him. But if we ask what in the object is desired, or why it is desired, we must answer, For its own original or secondary capacity to please or displease. That this is true of all those objects which address the sense-organs will not be denied. It is still further confirmed by the generally acknowledged truth, that the sensible qualities of material objects are phrased in the categories of causality or adaptation, with reference to the effects which they produce in the sentient soul. Much more is this true of those higher relations which conditionate the personal emotions.

To assert that we desire the object, and not the good which it occasions, is disproved still further by the well-known fact that we often desire objects under a mistaken judgment of the properties which they are supposed to possess. In every such case the instant that we discover our mistake, our desire is turned into aversion or the converse; as an apple or orange which looks fair and attractive is not unfrequently found, on tasting, to be insipid or

Desire of an
object for its
own sake.

offensive,¹ or sometimes it happens that a person's countenance or manners seem to indicate the opposite of his real feelings and character as discovered by closer acquaintance. In such a case our complacency and desire, or their opposites, are suddenly and consciously reversed. That this law holds good of the personal affections, and even the most disinterested, is evident from the sudden changes which these affections undergo on the discovery of unexpected occasions for the same.

We do, indeed, often say that we desire or dislike an object *for its own sake*, as knowledge or food; but we uniformly mean by the phrase, "for its capacity to affect us directly with pleasure or pain." For example: we desire knowledge or society for the pleasure which they give us of themselves, and not for any secondary advantages which will follow, as for the reputation or wealth which knowledge commands, or which society may offer to us. To deny that we desire an object for the pleasure or satisfaction which it gives, would be to deny that it gives pleasure, which would be the same as to deny that we desire it at all. The language used, "for its own sake," is invariably employed to convey the meaning that the object of itself, and directly, gives pleasure or good.

It was a current maxim with the Scholastics, "*Ignoti nulla cupido*," which affirms our position distinctly and fully; viz., that every object desired must be known or believed to stand in some relation to the affectional capacity of the person desiring it, and that this known relation is the direct object of the consequent desire, and the remote reason why the object is desired.

¹ Thus Milton narrates of the fallen spirits:—

"Greedily they plucked
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;
This, more delusive, not the touch but taste
Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste
With spattering noise rejected."

Paradise Lost, book x.

§ 11. It may be granted, to those who insist upon it, that man, like other sentient beings, is endowed with certain impulses which excite him to certain determinate forms of activity, previously to and independently of any conscious experience of the subjective good which they bring, or the ends for which they are provided. It may even be conceded that such an impulse may lie at the root of every one of the conscious sensibilities, and originally prompt it to action. But the impelling force of any such impulse is clearly distinguishable from the exercise of the intelligent desire, when it responds to the good which the sensibility gives, before it is in any sense controlled by the will, and therefore can have no moral quality. If we call that which is purely instinctive a blind impulse (German, *Trieb*), it is clearly distinguished from intelligent desire. Desire proper is defined by Spinoza (*Ethica*, part iii. prop. 9, Schol.), "*Cupiditas est appetitus cum ejusdem conscientia.*" In this sense, the maxim "*Ignoti nulla cupido*" is eminently true and important. Of mere instinct or impulse, we cannot, indeed, affirm this; but Ethics takes no account of instinctive impulses, whether they pertain to the senses or the soul.

An able writer (Ludovic Carrau, *La Morale Utilitaire*, Paris, 2me partie, chaps. ii., iii.) has urged against the utilitarian philosophy with great energy and ability the critical objection, that it fails to recognize the possibility of those unconscious impulses which precede all experience, and exclude all knowledge, of the subjective good or evil which their gratification involves. The criticism is certainly good against any theory which fails to recognize original susceptibilities in the soul to good and evil, attended it may be by unconscious instincts and impulses to the appropriate activities, or which seeks to explain the unselfish desires by some secondary relation to the self-centred or unsocial instincts of the individual. But it cannot hold against the analysis which we have given of the intelligent desires, and the place which we have assigned to desire in the conscious experiences of men. We submit that all impulses which remain forever below consciousness can have no relation to those affections and desires which impel to intelligent and responsible volition.

§ 12. It is objected against the view asserted, (1) That we are not conscious, in the act of desire, of referring to our subjective good as its direct and proper object. Let this be admitted. The fact that we do not consciously recognize every element or relation of our psychical activities by no means proves that we do not apprehend them in fact. In the judgments of vision by the acquired perceptions we do not always distinguish the data by which we judge and perceive.

Possibly exceptional instinctive impulses.

Objections to the position taken. (1) We are not conscious of referring to subjective good.

We look at a distant object, we determine its height or its size, but do not distinguish the indications which give our conclusion, and yet we unquestionably reach that conclusion by means of them. They enter into our conscious experience in the process, though we may not notice or recall them in the result.

In respect to this point, the examples of desires acknowledged to be secondary are pertinent and decisive. The desire of money, i.e., coin or paper, is admitted to be secondary. Not only is it acknowledged that money is itself desirable for the good which it will purchase, but any thing which is judged to be money is desired only so long as it is supposed to have purchasing power. Let a man see a coin or a bank-note at his feet, and he grasps it with eagerness; but, so soon as he discovers that either is counterfeit, he drops it as readily. And yet he is not aware that he thinks of or desires any thing, except what he calls the object, pure and simple.

It is also true, that under the influence of rapid, and what are sometimes called the inseparable associations, the desires can be stimulated, as it would seem, by the object only, without the distinct apprehension or recognition of that which makes it either offensive or pleasing. And yet a moment's reflection will convince any one, that, had the associations been reversed, the object which pleases would offend, or the opposite, and the desire would follow the painful or pleasing experience.

(2) It is urged again, that, in the case of active and absorbing desires, the object, as such, fills the mind, and engrosses the attention. Let a drowning man see a boat or a rope, and his thoughts, we are told, are engrossed by the one or the other as he longs and struggles to lay hold of it. He attends only to the rope, and does not reflect on its relations to his safety. The more active the impulse, the more completely is the mind absorbed with the object which he strives to reach. This, in a sense, is true. But suppose, that, as he is struggling, the rope is seen to float loosely on the water,

(2) The object desired fills the mind.

and to lose its connection with the shore ; or that the man suddenly touches the bottom, and no longer needs the boat : the newly discovered relations of the boat or the rope to his needs in an instant change his desires. It follows that the object never originally occupied the mind, in any of these cases, to the exclusion of its relations to his feelings and needs. These relations were not only discerned, but were the only objects of interest to his feelings.

The reason why, in the examples supposed, the object must be present to excite desire, and why it seems to fill and engross the soul, is that it must be perceived or thought of in order to awaken and sustain the feeling or affection which prompts the desire. The instant it should be displaced by another object, which has other relations to the soul, the desire must, of necessity, cease to burn, for want of the fuel on which it might feed.

(3) It is objected still further that the instinctive desires or impulses do not conform to this rule. When the young seeks its mother, or the animal is impelled to its destined activities, its impulses, it is urged, are not moved by any experience of belief of the good which the act or object has in reserve. This may be truly said ; but, so far as this is true, an instinctive impulse is not properly a desire. “Instinct” is defined by Paley as “a propensity prior to experience, and independent of instruction.” So far as it is prior to experience, and certainly so far as it is independent of instruction, it is independent of knowledge of any kind. But instinct, it may be said, is stimulated in no small degree by the pleasure which attends the special activity for which nature has destined the animal. If this is true, then the instinctive impulses conform to the laws and methods of those desires which are intelligent.

(4) Much less do the affections.

(4) It is urged, with greater plausibility and confidence at first thought, that this law of desire does not hold good of the so-called disinterested or personal affections ; as, for example, of the affections of pity and

love. Some writers have gone so far as to deny that the element of desire enters into the personal affections at all.

Of this objection we would observe, Suppose it were true that the well-being of the friends whom we love did not make us glad, or the suffering of the distressed did not make us sad : what, in such a case, would be thought of the disinterestedness of either our love or our pity? No one will deny that the well-being or the suffering of those whom we love or pity affects us pleasantly and painfully as really and as directly as do the objects of the simpler desires ; e.g., as a delicious fruit, or the society of a friend, or the exercise of power. The disinterested affections differ from those that terminate with ourselves, in that their moving occasion or their exciting object—the original element in the process—is the happiness of another, or his relief from suffering, without respect to any so-called private interest of our own : in other words, it is an ultimate fact that we are made glad or sad by his happiness, or his relief from suffering. The capacity for this particular form of happiness is, in its very nature, disinterested. The happiness or sorrow depends directly on the good or ill of another ; but the relation of the exciting object to the consequent desire is the same, whether this object gives good to ourselves directly and exclusively, or whether it be the happiness or calamity of another which makes us alternately glad or sad. Whatever be the object, it must hold the same relation to the affection, so far as that affection becomes a desire. President Hopkins says very truly (*The Law of Love*, part ii. class i. chap. v.), “There are two ways in which subjective good may come to us : one is through the action of other things and persons upon us ; the other, through the activity of our own powers put forth with reference to them, that is, virtually through receiving and giving.” And Professor Calderwood (*Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, part ii. chap. i.) : “In practical tendency the affections are the reverse of the desires. Desires absorb : affections give out.” It should be remembered, however, that the affections

which “*give*” are purely natural, not voluntary. As natural and passive emotions, they are disinterested, unselfish, *altruistic*; but, as involving or leaping into desires, they obey the law of desire which we have explained.

This contrast between these two classes of emotions with which we are at present concerned, it will be observed, holds good of them as natural sensibilities, and not at all as penetrated and transfigured by the will. When the affection becomes voluntary, whether it is disinterested or self-centred, whether it is a *giving* or *receiving* impulse, depends on the question whether the desire which prevails includes or excludes the happiness which comes from the well-being of the friend whom we love, or from the relief of the sufferer whom we pity. The desire, as such, is neither selfish nor unselfish till it becomes voluntary, whatever be its object. Moreover, the voluntary purpose will fix the attention upon the object chosen, and give energy and play to the desire which it stimulates.

Leibnitz recognizes this distinction perhaps over-sharply in contrasting the love of concupiscence and the love of benevolence: “*Le premier nous fait en vue nôtre plaisir, et le second celui d’autrui, mais comme faisant ou plutôt constituant le nôtre, car s’il ne rejaillissoit pas sur nous en quelque façon, nous ne pourrions pas nous y intéresser puisqu’il est impossible, quoiqu’un dise, d’être détaché du bien propre. Et voilà comment il faut entendre l’amour désintéressé ou non mercenaire, pour en bien concevoir la noblesse, et pour ne point tomber cependant dans la chimérique.*” — *Nouv. Essais*, liv. ii. chap. xx. §§ 4, 5.

“*Amare autem sive diligere est felicitate alterius delectari vel quod eodem redit felicitatem alienam asciscere in suam . . . unde difficilis nodus solvitur . . . scilicet quorum felicitas delectat eorum felicitas in nostram ingreditur nam quæ delectant per se expetuntur.*” — *De Not. Juris et Justitia*, opera, ed. Erd., p. 118.

Bishop Butler is equally explicit in expressing the same opinion (Sermon, *On the Love of our Neighbor*): “The short of the matter is no more than this: happiness consists in the gratification of certain affections, appetites, passions, with objects which are by nature adapted to them. . . . Love of our neighbor is one of these affections. This, considered as a virtuous principle, is gratified by a con-

sciousness of endeavoring to promote the good of others, but, considered as a natural affection, its gratification consists in the actual accomplishment of this endeavor. Now, indulgence or gratification of this affection, whether in that consciousness or this accomplishment, has the same respect to interest as indulgence of any other affection: they equally proceed or do not proceed from self-love; they equally include or equally exclude this principle."

Dr. Jonathan Edwards writes to the same effect: "A man may love himself as much as one can, and may be in the exercise of a high degree of love to his own happiness, ceaselessly longing for it, and yet he may so place that happiness, that, in the very act of seeking it, he may be in the highest exercise of love to God; as, for example, *when the happiness that he longs for is to glorify God, or to behold his glory, or to hold communion with him.*" — *Charity and its Fruits*, lect. viii.

Of Jonathan
Edwards.

Dr. J. W. Alexander also: "We are unable to think of any one as a reasonable human being, who does not, in all possible circumstances, desire his own welfare. One may choose a present evil, or relinquish a present good, but it is in every case with the hope of avoiding some greater evil, or obtaining some greater good." — *Consolation*, New York, 1856. See also an interesting discussion of this much vexed point in *The Thirty Years' Correspondence between John Jebb, D.D., F.R.S., and Alexander Knox, M.R.I.A.*, Philadelphia, 1835, letters 70, 71, 81, and 82; cf. also Appendix to the *Law of Love*, by MARK HOPKINS, D.D., LL.D., revised edition, *Correspondence between Presidents Hopkins and McCosh*.

Of Dr. J. W.
Alexander.

§ 13. It should be remembered, however, that the so-called desire of happiness is no special sensibility with its attendant desire which is co-ordinate with the appetites, affections, etc., and superadded to them all. There is in man no separate desire of happiness, such as that of food, or society, or knowledge, which might be supposed to harmonize or come in conflict with any or all of these special affections and impulses. No man ever desired happiness in the general or the abstract. He may desire to be relieved from some form of pain or *ennui*, experienced or imagined, and may generalize this object as some undefined form of good; or he may vaguely conceive some form of gratification which differs from the enjoyment or pain of the moment, and of which kind of good he forms only an

Desire of
happiness
not co-ordi-
nate with any
of the special
affections or
desires.

indefinite conception: but he can never catch himself or his neighbor thinking of happiness in the abstract, and desiring it, nor as setting up this desire as an end at which to aim, or a standard by which to measure his own doings or achievements. The desire of happiness, so called, is simply the common characteristic of several special impulses towards special objects. The subjective satisfaction which all of these objects impart, and which is common to them all, is generalized as happiness. It follows that such a desire of happiness, being in no sense co-ordinate with any one desire or with many, can never conflict with any nor with all; it can neither hinder nor aid any one of the special desires: *it cannot, therefore, be a reason for the indulgence of any such desire.*

It is equally true that *no single desire can be resolved into the desire of happiness*, while yet it is and must be true that every individual desire must be moved by the special subjective good which its object can excite or produce; and every particular class of emotions has a particular kind of good which prompts the desire which naturally and necessarily responds to it by springing into activity when excited by its object.

The desire of happiness spoken of is, however, called a *Rational desire*, because rational persons are alone capable of forming the concept of happiness, or can compare and discriminate between different kinds of good, or propose the activities or objects which terminate in one or other, or can judge between the acts and objects which result in these differing subjective states, or reflect upon their own agency in procuring, or failing to procure, these results to themselves or others. Even the brute acts from this desire for good as truly as does man; although through the defect of reason he fails to rationalize the impulse by generalizing its object, and consequently cannot attain to the intelligent, and pre-eminently to the self-conscious or reflective, control of his actions or his character. The desire of happiness in the

No single desire can be resolved into the desire of happiness.

Why called a rational desire by eminence.

most gifted animal is a blind impulse, which is cultivated by training from without, or by the agency of a limited but vivid memory, and directed mainly by what we call instinct. In man this desire becomes an ennobling and elevating impulse to the actions, the habits, and character. It has of itself no moral quality; although it gives intellectual dignity to the character, the aims, and the achievements.

It should be remembered, however, that even man, with all his powers of abstraction and generalization, never proposes happiness, as such, as a motive to a single feeling or action. Though man alone can form the conception of happiness, yet he never proposes happiness to himself as an object of desire. The nearest approach to the experience of such a desire would be the wish for indefinite relief from severe and unalloyed pain. Such a relief is imagined as the enjoyment of some indefinite but positive good, in place of suffering, which is mistaken for happiness in the abstract. We may safely say that desire, so far as it is rational, always terminates in some good, which is made more or less definite by the memory or imagination.

This so-called desire of happiness is misnamed "self-love," and under this unfortunate appellation has been the occasion of no little confusion of thought, and active, not to say acrid, recrimination (*vide* DUGALD STEWART, *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, part ii. chap. i. § 5; *Active and Moral Powers*, book ii. chap. i.). Not a few writers insist that self-love, in all its forms, is not only morally evil, but that it is the root and principle of all moral evil. It is obvious that the affection thus condemned must be a voluntary affection, and cannot be synonymous with the involuntary and necessary desire of happiness. Dr. Jonathan Edwards asserts "that the inordinateness of self-love does not consist in our love of happiness being absolutely considered too great in degree, but in its being too great comparatively, and in placing our happiness in that which is confined to self" (*Charity*, etc., lect. viii.). And J. W. Alexander says, "We are to love our neighbors as ourselves. We may, then, love ourselves. May! we must love ourselves; and self-love becomes sin only when it becomes selfishness" (*Consolation*, etc.). We have already quoted from Butler: "Now, indulgence or gratification of this affection, whether in that consciousness or this accomplishment, has the same respect to interested indulgence as any other affection:

Why mis-
called "self-
love."

they equally proceed or do not proceed from self-love ; they equally include or exclude this principle." The phrases contrasted by Edwards, viz., "too great comparatively" and "too great in degree," would be far more felicitously and truly expressed by "involuntarily desired" and "voluntarily preferred" (see also JOHN BROWN : *Essays on the Characteristics*, London, 1751 ; essay 2, on *The Motives to Virtue*).

§ 14. The sensibilities and their attendant desires are still

Sensibilities
distinguish-
ed as
simple and
complex.

further distinguished as *simple* or *original*, and *complex* or *derived*. The simple are those which are capable of being excited alone, under their appropriate conditions. Whether these conditions them-

selves may be single or multiple is immaterial, provided the subjective affection can occur by itself, and be distinguished in consciousness. We concern ourselves simply and solely with the soul's subjective condition, inasmuch as this experience must, in its nature, be known only to the soul itself, and is known sufficiently by itself. It also often happens that a simple emotion requires two or more objects in some special relation to one another. This is true of most, if not all, the sensibilities which are æsthetical, including the sense of melody and harmony in sounds, of harmony in color, of grace in motion, etc. On the other hand, a complex of distinguishable objects may awaken a complex of blended and yet distinguishable emotions. A single bright color pleases simply, and awakens a simple emotion ; a painting awakens a complex of sensibilities from several distinguishable objects, and their relations to one another, — from the colors apart, from their gradation and harmony, from beauty of form, correctness of drawing, and from skilfully adjusted composition ; while all these elements together give a pleasant and consistent expression of thought and feeling. Complex emotions are also said to be *mingled* when they are opposite in character ; some being pleasing, and others displeasing. Most, if not all, of the objects which address our sensibilities, being complex in their nature, appeal to many sensibilities. Some of these may be

pleasant, while others are disagreeable. A complex of sounds in many tones or from many voices, whether these tones or voices are or are not musical; of colors in a landscape or portrait; of surface and outline, whether in a drawing or picture; of tastes, odors, or touches, to say nothing of higher experiences, — are examples too familiar to require illustration.

§ 15. The feelings and accompanying desires are again distinguished as *primary* or *original*, on the one hand, and *secondary* or *artificial*, on the other. Some of these last are also called conventional and factitious. The first are supposed to be inherent in the constitution of every human being, and therefore to be essential to human nature. The second are the products of circumstances, — those which are common and normal in the ordinary conditions of human existence, and those which are variable, and depend on occasional excitements. The parental or the conjugal affections are not experienced by every human being; and yet both are called natural affections in the sense that they are invariably called into exercise under appropriate circumstances, and are uniform in their character whenever they exist. Other affections and tastes or passions, as for rare books, autographs, old china, old furniture, old brass, *bric-à-brac*, etc., are called *factitious* or *artificial* because the circumstances which call them forth are relatively infrequent; and, even when present, their effects are not constant and uniform, but depend on accidental or conventional conditions. Whether normal or artificial, such affections are called secondary, because in point of time they follow the primary, and depend upon them for their origination, their sustentation, and the possibility of their existence and exercise.

Also as primary and secondary.

A very familiar example of a *secondary* and in one sense an *artificial* affection is the love of money. Man need have no original interest in the material called money, whether it be coin or paper; but he cannot fail to have it in those objects which money will procure. So soon, how-

The love of money.

ever, as he learns that money will procure these objects, and procure them without delay, and that it is indispensable to the enjoyment and possession of them, he learns to love money with what seems to be a direct and original affection, — an affection which for energy and tenacity seems to be rooted most deeply in the nature of man, and yet is distinctly traceable to roots deeper than itself.

Another example of a secondary affection is the pleasure or disgust which is felt towards any object or event **Associated sensibilities.** which has become intimately *associated* with what is naturally agreeable or disagreeable. An article of dress may be naturally convenient or inconvenient; a form of speech may be pleasing or displeasing: but if either or both have been so connected with that which pleases or offends us, as constantly and vividly to call up the attendant emotion, the associated object becomes itself offensive or agreeable, and often tenaciously and passionately.

These examples indicate the two classes of secondary or artificial sensibilities, and the grounds and history of each. **Two classes of.** The first class are founded on the relation of cause to effect, involving that of means and ends; the end or effect being desired by a natural, and the means or cause by a secondary, affection. The second class are founded on the so-called association of ideas, by the operation of which a close and frequent conjunction of two objects causes the one to be desired or rejected on account of its companion. Those philosophers who resolve the relation of cause and effect into that of antecedence or co-existence, and our belief of its constancy and universality into oft-repeated associations, must necessarily unite the two classes into one, and explain all the so-called secondary desires by the association of ideas. The ethical theories of the associationalists will require special attention, inasmuch as they resolve all the moral relations and emotions into the operation of these laws (cf. §§ 44, 45).

Many of the secondary desires become the strongest and the

most conspicuous impulses of our nature. Such are the love of money and fashion, which have been referred to. Not infrequently these affections become so powerful and insidious as to defeat the very ends for which they exist, and to displace the primary impulses which originally stimulated and sustained them. The miser begins by loving money because he desires the good which money alone will procure, but ends with loving money of itself with such exclusive energy as to sacrifice to this passion every good which makes money desirable or valuable. Devotion to some inconvenient and unhealthy fashion impels men and women to desire indulgences which are incompatible with many of the gratifications which fashion itself counts of the highest value.

**Strength of
the secondary
sensibilities.**

Under the complex relations of human existence, especially in a highly artificial civilization, the number of secondary sensibilities and desires is greatly increased, and many of the factitious displace and counteract those which are acknowledged to be primary and natural. Nothing more strikingly illustrates the resources and the complex character of man's nature than its capacity to develop these artificial likings and dislikings, and the importance which they assume as the conditions of human happiness. The analysis of some of the most familiar and strongest of human affections, and the estimate of their relative energy as springs of man's conduct, become for this reason very difficult. In a practical way men are often convinced of this truth when they find it by no means easy to discover the real impulses which originate and control their own actions. The most honest of men are frequently puzzled to trace to its originating and controlling element some overmastering passion which they desire to overcome.

**Their num-
ber and com-
plexity.**

We are also embarrassed with special difficulties when the feelings are analyzed for speculative ends, because of the variety of constituents which are or may be concerned in the product, and the difficulty of estimating the presence and force

of the voluntary element. This difficulty is greatly increased because the external manifestations or indications of the feelings within are so easily disguised, and so hard to be tested by decisive experiments or unvaried rules. But, however diverse these theories may be in their conclusions, they have one common aim, — they propose a single class of inquiries ; viz., *What are the simple or primary elements into which may be resolved the complex and derived capacities and experiences which we call the emotional nature and its affections, including the capacities and experiences which are known as moral?* They imply, if they do not re-assert, the position already taken, that Moral Science is dependent on, because it is largely resolved into, a correct Psychology. They show that ethical science is but another name for an exact and comprehensive analysis of psychological phenomena, and the explanation and determination of these phenomena by means of ultimate philosophical relations or metaphysical intuitions.

CHAPTER II.

THE SENSIBILITIES CLASSIFIED.

§ 16. IF it is not easy to analyze the sensibilities into their original and simplest elements, it follows that it is not easy to classify them. Every synthesis of elements as similar supposes that these elements are more or less clearly distinguishable. Every arrangement of these elements into groups that are higher or lower supposes a previous discrimination of the same as more or less general in their manifestation through phenomena. In other words, every correct and exhaustive classification follows a sharp and comprehensive analysis. As the experiences are subjective (i.e., as they pertain to those internal experiences which are consciously known), it might seem that they should be separated and constructed according to the differences or similarities which are experienced in and discerned by consciousness. Inasmuch, however, as these experiences are dependent upon their exciting objects, and these objects are sharply presented to the intellect, and inasmuch as we know by observation and conclude by analogy that different objects cause or occasion different experiences, we discriminate and unite them according to the objects which conditionate them. Both these elements, therefore (viz., the subjective and objective), control our classification, and determine its nomenclature. For the reasons given, however, the object or conditioning occasion is prominent in deciding

Sensibilities
not easily
classified.

the classification and terminology of the sensibilities and the will.

The following scheme is proposed: the animal or sensuous, including the instinctive; the intellectual; the imaginative and æsthetic; the personal, involving the love of power and superiority, of achievement and property; the social, both sympathetic and antipathetic; the reflex, including the prudential and moral. Dr. Thomas Reid recognizes the

**Proposed
scheme of
classification.
Drs. Reid and
Stewart.**

mechanical, animal, and rational (*Essays on the Active Powers*, ess. iii. part i. chap. i.); Dugald Stewart, the instinctive or implanted propensities, including the appetites, the desires, and the affections; the rational and governing principles, including self-love and the moral faculty (*Active and Moral Powers*, Introduction). Sir William Hamilton divides the sensibilities into the corporeal and mental. The corporeal are

**Sir William
Hamilton.**

again divided into two which accompany the special and the common sensations. The mental are again subdivided into

the contemplative and the practical. The contemplative are those impelling respectively to the lower and the higher intellectual activities. The practical tend to self-preservation, the enjoyment of existence, the preservation of the species, to perfection and development and the moral law (*Lectures on Metaphysics*, lect. xlv., xlv.). Dr. Thomas C. Upham divides

**Dr. Thomas
C. Upham.**

the sensibilities into the natural or pathematic, and the moral. The natural are subdivided into the emotions and desires; the desires again being subdivided into the appetites, the propensities, and the affections. The propensities are to self-

preservation, curiosity, imitableness, esteem, property, power, vivacity, society, resentment, benevolence, and humanity, to happiness (i.e., self-love), to society. The affections are subdivided into resentment, benevolence in the form of domestic affections, humanity, patriotism, pity, gratitude, love to God (*Mental Philosophy*, vol. ii., Introduction, chap. ii.).

**Dr. William
Whewell.**

Dr. W. Whewell recognizes the appetites, the affections tending to persons, the mental desires to abstractions (as safety, property, family and civil society, a common understanding,

superiority) and to knowledge; the moral sentiments and the reflex sentiments as of being loved, and self-approval (*Elements of Morality*, Introduction, chap. ii.).

**The sensibili-
ties differ in
the natural
quality of the
good which
they con-
dition.**

§ 17. The sensibilities and their attendant desires differ in respect to *the quality or the kind of good*, and *respectively of the evil, which they condition or impart*. We speak of the sensibilities as natural only, and not at all of them as voluntary and

moral. We speak of the natural exercise of any sensibilities

as this is or might be known in conscious experience, and judged by that comparison and discrimination which are implied in the exercise of consciousness by man as a rational being. That our experiences of sensitive good and evil differ in *intensity* or *degree* is conceded by all. The unconscious testimony of human language, and the ready assent of the human race, seem to coincide in respect to this point. That one experience of heat or odor, of surprise or anger, of love or hatred, is more energetic than another, all men believe, and no man will deny; but that the gratification of the different sensibilities also differs in kind, when compared, so that one would be pronounced naturally better than another, irrespectively of any moral relations, is by no means universally conceded by philosophers. Thus Paley writes: "I will omit much useless declama- Views of
Paley. tion on the dignity and capacity of our nature; the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to the animal part of our constitution; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy of some satisfactions, or the meanness, grossness, and sensuality of others, — because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing but in continuance and intensity" (*Moral and Political Philosophy*, book i. chap. vi.). Jeremy Bentham pithily says, "Quantity of pleasure being equal, Jeremy
Bentham. pushpin is as good as poetry," and holds that the value of a pleasure depends on its intensity, duration, certainty, propinquity, purity (i.e., freedom from being followed by pain), security, and extent (*Morals and Legislation*, i. § 8). On the other hand, John Stuart Mill asserts, "It John Stuart
Mill. would be absurd, that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone" (*Utilitarianism*, chap. ii.). The criterion, or proof, of this assertion, he finds in the general consent of mankind: "Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all, or almost all, who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespectively of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is

the most desirable pleasure " (*Id.*)¹ It may not be easy to fix upon the finer divisions of a scale according to which the different sensibilities of the same general class are ranked ; but it will be generally conceded, that bodily pleasures are inferior to the intellectual, social, and sympathetic, and that, when two of these species of satisfaction are brought into competition, one is discerned to be a higher and better good than the other. This difference in quality accounts for the different appellations which are applied to the gratifications of the several susceptibilities of our nature. The terms "pleasure," "enjoyment," "happiness," and "blessedness," all of which are in actual and constant use, suggest and signify a different natural value in the sensations and emotions ; which value pertains to the original susceptibilities, apart from the admixture of any voluntary activity, or the moral element in any or in all.

For philosophical uses, it is not only desirable, but necessary, to select some term which shall be broad enough to cover all these kinds and forms of subjective good, from the highest to the lowest. The needs and uses of common life provide no such term. We cannot invent, and force into use, a technical appellation, as in the artificial nomenclature of chemistry and geology, which should be divested of the associations or sanctions derived from the uses of common life, for the reason that the distinctions and

No single
term for
every kind of
subjective
good.

¹ J. MARTINEAU, *Miscellanies*, Am. ed., vol. ii. pp. 17, 18; *Review of Whewell's Morality*. Cf. comments on the same; SIDGWICK, *Methods of Ethics*, book iii. chap. xii. See also LOTZE, *Mikrokosmos*, 5tes Buch, 5tes Kapitel. Against the views expressed by Martineau, Professor Sidgwick says that it is impossible in many cases to distinguish between one gratified sensibility and another as higher and lower. We reply, without discussing the general question, In some cases it is possible, and it is only when such discrimination is possible that moral obligation arises. This happens only when the question of voluntary preference and control presents itself for decision between two classes of affections or emotions; as the self-terminating and the self-sacrificing, or the sensual as contrasted with the intellectual and active.

nomenclature of Ethics are designed for universal and popular use. They neither can nor ought to be limited to the terminology of the schools. On the other hand, to attempt to generalize and broaden any specific term offends the associations and usages which have attached a limited and special significance to every appellation. Accordingly, "pleasure"

has always been thought too limited and low a term to apply to the gratification of the higher sensibilities. "Blessedness" and "happiness," even, are too elevated to designate the gratification of any of the lower appetites. "Enjoyment" and "satisfaction," though freely used of the lower and intermediate, are rejected as unsuitable to the highest. "Good" and "well-being" are as free from objection as any terms: both these, however, are as often applied to the causes or occasions of good as to their effects in the inward experience, and hence frequent and serious ambiguities arise (cf. § 67 (3)).

Pleasure and satisfaction, blessedness and happiness, good and well-being.

And yet it is necessary to find some term which may be applied to all, from the highest to the lowest, and be limited, if possible, to the psychical or subjective element. Many, if not most, of the objections urged against the doctrine that the exercise of every sensibility gives some form or species of satisfaction, find their chief plausibility in the tenacious associations by which these terms are indissolubly connected with gratifications of a lower quality or grade, or with such as the will degrades to the service of selfishness or appetite.

We repeat, also, the truth, that what is true of the appellations for these subjective experiences is true of their objective conditions or causes. We find it difficult to select terms sufficiently generic to designate all of these, without suggesting associations that are more or less closely connected with single classes of objects. And yet in general, as we say of a gratified sensibility that it is *good*, so we say of the cause or condition of its gratification, that it is *a good*. But it is not with the same associations, or in the same meaning, that we call food or

a fortune a good, as we speak of knowledge or society as a good, or say of the friend whom we love with disinterested devotion, or the God whom we supremely adore, that each is our good; and yet at times we do not hesitate to designate each of these blessings, in a sense, as our supreme Good.

We very properly distinguish between "worth" and "value," using "worth" to designate that object which is ultimate and also highest in the quality of its subjective good, as the good which is experienced in a disinterested act or emotion, or which is found in the highest moral and personal qualities. "Value" ordinarily designates some end or use to which an object may be applied. Utility, by universal and inveterate usage, is limited to those objects or conditions of good which are means to ends; the ends being also, more frequently, neither final nor ultimate, but subordinated to some higher end. No action, or object, or emotion, is called useful which is not subordinated to something other than itself. For this reason, utility should never be applied to any agent which acts directly upon any capacity for a simple or original feeling. We cannot speak of an object which we directly enjoy (as the food which we taste, or the friend whom we love) as *useful* for enjoyment or happiness. Utility is reserved exclusively for those relations which are secondary and indirect, and usually are objective and external rather than subjective and psychical. With still less propriety can an individual sensibility be said to be useful with respect to that common quality, as happiness, which is characteristic of every individual or subordinate species of its class. The quality or capacity common to every specific sensibility of giving pleasure or pain cannot be regarded as a tendency in that sensibility towards the production of this pleasure or pain. The so-called "tendency" is another term for the fitness or adaptation of a sensibility to its supposed design or end, and cannot be called its utility. The relation of fitness or adaptation is real and important; but "utility" is not the proper term by which to designate it, for the reasons already given.¹

¹ And yet Dr. Dwight, following Paley, does not hesitate to define "utility as a tendency to produce happiness" (*Theology*, sermon xcix.); but he would doubtless distinguish the voluntary sensibility from the involuntary, and limit the designation of virtuous to the former (cf. PALEY, *Moral and Political Philosophy*, book ii. chap. vi.; JEREMY BENTHAM, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, i. § 8; J. S. MILL on *Utilitarianism*, chap. ii.). The term "utility" has been used in the senses criticised above, by both the friends and foes of very diverse systems, and become by its motley appendages a veritable *scarecrow* in the gardens of philosophy and theology, at which every passer-by throws a missile.

§ 18. Following the analysis already given of the sensibilities into feelings and desires, we observe that the sensibilities, as feelings, are simply *passive*. So long as the exciting object or condition is present and attended to, the appropriate feeling must necessarily be experienced. Any object and every object which is fitted to excite the feelings of pleasure or pain must excite those feelings so long as it is confronted with or apprehended by the sensitive soul. The soul, as pure sensibility, can never withhold the appropriate emotion, but finds itself completely in the power, and, so to speak, at the mercy, of the objects with which it comes in contact. For the completeness of this contact the attention needs, indeed, to be concentrated and sustained. If this be diverted, the object is as though it were not, in respect to its power to excite and impel. But given the present object and the attentive soul, and the soul must necessarily feel, and be impelled to action. An apparent exception to this rule is furnished in the corporeal sensibilities. These depend on two factors or conditions, — the tone of the bodily organism, and the energy of the material excitant or object. The material organism, as such, is limited in its capacities to respond to the physiological excitant. Moreover, as animated by the sensitive soul, it is also limited in its capacities for pleasure or pain. Food does not continue to please when satiety has displaced hunger. Light wearies or offends the eye when out of due proportion to its capacity to re-act, or when either the eye or the soul is wearied by prolonged excitement. Even when the enjoyment is purely psychical, the soul's capacity for emotion may be weakened by physiological conditions. These apparent exceptions confirm, rather than weaken, our confidence in the general law that the soul, in its capacities to feel, is simply passive under the stimulus of its exciting conditions. Its power to avoid or control feeling lies in another power than the capacity for simple feeling.

The sensibilities, as emotions, are simply passive.

Sensibilities act under certain conditions.

Apparent exceptions in bodily experience.

By whatever agency the avoidance or control of the sensibilities is effected, it is accomplished proximately by withdrawing the attention from the objects which excite them; and this is achieved *by fixing the attention on other objects, and yielding the soul to their power.* The feelings which are natural to man, whether corporeal or psychical, must be aroused, so long as the objects which solicit them are attended to. It is not in human nature to avoid or resist any feeling in the presence of its exciting object. The best of men hold in their very constitution natural elements which by voluntary perversion or excess become the most degrading of appetites and the most hateful of passions. "The heart of man," says Sir Thomas Brown in the "Religio Medici," "is the place the devils dwell in. I feel sometimes a hell within myself. Lucifer keeps his court in my breast. Legion is roused in me."

The truth that our emotions are passive is attested by the tendency to call them "passions." This appellation is justified whenever they are excited or indulged with unusual strength or violence. The entire class, in the nomenclature of some philosophers, are designated as passive or pathematic affections.

§ 19. *The capacity for the strength or energy of any feeling is increased by repetition.* We speak here of the natural capacity to enjoy or suffer, and not at all of the acquired dexterity to avoid or control either gladness or pain by voluntary activity. The two may conspire and act together, but they may also be distinguished. Apart from the will and what it can do, the more a man exercises a sensibility as such, the more sensitive does it become to its exciting cause, and the larger is its capacity for subsequent energy of action. The experience which every man has of himself, and the observation which he takes of other men, confirm this assertion. It certainly will not be denied of any experience which is purely psychical. The soul given to the pleasures of knowledge, society, taste, affection, duty, and religion, finds its capacity and its sensitiveness for each to increase by use and repetition.

Similarly the capacities of pleasure from hate, envy, selfishness, and revenge, are enlarged by habit, however much they may be counterbalanced and repressed by the pains and stings which sometimes re-act with proportionate energy.

To this general law there are two apparent exceptions: the *bodily appetites*, by repeated indulgence, become weaker in their capacity to give pleasure; and *novel* objects are enjoyed with a special zest, which is diminished after the occasions or objects have ceased to be new.

Of the first it is enough to say that the repeated gratification of a bodily appetite weakens the sensitiveness of the bodily organism, and consequently diminishes the energy of the sensation; of the second, that the heightened, and in its very nature the temporary, enjoyment which comes from a novel or contrasted experience, cannot, in the nature of the case, be sustained when its occasion has ceased, i.e., when the zest from contrast has become impossible by repetition.

Exception,
the bodily
appetites.

Another exception might be urged, that, by the passive familiarity with objects or scenes that are fitted to excite feeling, the soul often seems comparatively insensible to their influence; as the surgeon to the pain he gives, or as the soldier is hardened and not softened by the agony and death with which he is conversant, and the miser becomes more unfeeling the more familiar he is with the cries and tears which his cruel selfishness extorts. Phenomena of this kind are in no sense exceptions to our principle: they rather confirm it. Such phenomena are explicable only as we recognize the presence or absence of the voluntary element. The surgeon, the soldier, and miser do not feel, because by acts of will, so often repeated as to have formed spontaneous habits, they have learned gradually yet completely to withdraw the attention from the objects which would otherwise move the sensibilities. The apparent insensibility of either may often be, often it is not, real, being only the result of a

Effect of fa-
miliarity, the
soldier and
surgeon.

practised self-command in the art of controlling and regulating the attention. That the sensibility of the surgeon is not indurated by familiarity with suffering, is proved by the unquestioned fact that the practice of his profession may, and often does, form him into one of the most tender-hearted and sympathetic of men; as also, that, when he is simply a looker-on at a surgical operation in which his personal activity is not required, he is as quickly unmanned as any other bystander. The soldier is no more unfeeling than any other man, in scenes in which he can exert no activity. Before the conflict begins, it is only as he can occupy or divert his attention, that he can bring himself to stand quietly and await his orders. More than one sturdy officer has said to his trembling limbs, on going into action, "You would tremble more if you knew where I am about to carry you." The miser even, if he can be approached at an unguarded point, is open to the movings of humanity.

Bishop Butler (*Analogy*, i. chap. v.) has recognized and enforced the distinction between what he terms "the active and passive habits," and has called attention to the important law by which mere emotions, when they do not lead to action, become weaker by repetition, while those feelings which are expressed in words and acts, and so become active habits, become stronger in their impulsive force. At first it might seem that this principle conflicts with the general law that the repetition of a sensibility augments, or tends to augment, its strength and impulsive energy. On second thought it will be seen that what Butler calls the "active habits" are habits of the will, or, more exactly, habits of the intellect and sensibility which are formed by the will. So far as any emotional power is considered apart from the voluntary, its capacity for feeling, as such, grows relatively stronger by repetition, and comparatively weaker by disuse. The desire, also in obedience to the law already recognized, must also respond to each excitement of emotion, whether it be pleasant or painful, and in proportion to the energy of the emotion. In the case of the bodily appetites, while the capacity for sensuous gratification is weakened and limited by indulgence, and emphatically by habitual excess, the desire may be stimulated by such recollections of past enjoyments as the more limited capacities of the present cannot give, inducing inevitable disappointment and disgust at the contrast between the vividness of pleasures as remembered or imagined, and the feebleness of those which are experienced. To this must be added

Butler's distinction between active and passive habits.

the chagrin and discomfort which attend the effort of supplementing what fails in the quality of enjoyment by excess in quantity, or by artificial, unnatural, and, in the worst sense, brutal excitement. Hence the *ennui* and horrors of the drunkard and the debauchee, apart from moral self-condemnation and social reproach.

§ 20. The sensibilities have an *active as well as a passive* side. While feeling, as feeling, is only passive, desire is active or act-impelling. Its first and direct impulse is to the satisfaction of which the sensibilities, as feelings, are the conditions; the second, to the objects which conditionate this gratification; while the third impels to the psychical or bodily action which brings both the object and the satisfaction within the possession of the soul.

**Sensibilities
active, or act-
impelling.**

What we call activity is wide in its variety of meaning, and extent of application. It includes a very extensive range of phenomena, physical and psychical. The singular and unexplained material property called elasticity impels material particles or masses to reaction; i.e., to motion in a direction contrary to that in which either are acted upon. Muscular irritability responds to stimuli from without and from within by the agency of the senso-motor nerves. The lower animals obey those impulses to bodily and psychical activity which we call instinctive. The higher animals superadd to the instinctive those actions which they employ with a more or less distinct intelligence, and with a more or less enlarged adaptation to circumstances, both varied and fixed. Man rises to that wide range of psychical actions of which his nature is capable, to actions intellectual, affectional, ethical, and spiritual; to all of which he is prompted by the impulsive force of desire common to them all.

**Activity
used in a
variety of sig-
nifications.**

For example: man desires to know; that is, he finds satisfaction in the function or activity called knowing, and consequently desires the continuance or the repetition of the activity or function which gives him this enjoyment. As the condition of this activity and consequent satisfaction, he desires to be con-

fronted with knowable objects, both facts and relations, — with the events which gratify his curiosity, or the scientific truth which interests and quickens his reason, and stimulates and rewards the scientific imagination. Desiring these results, he is impelled to those activities which are the means of bringing them within his reach. The same laws hold of the affections, so far as they are desires, or involve the element of desire: hence the sensibilities are active powers because they are *act-impelling*. This impulsive property is ultimate in the human constitution. Whether the action is muscular and corporeal, whether it is psycho-physical or simply psychical, whether as psychical it is intellectual or affectional, we find it true that sensibility, when transformed into desire, is not only bent upon gratification, but impels to action.

It is erroneously assumed by many, that the will is the faculty which makes man capable of action. Thus Kant says: “To know, to feel, and to act, are the three functions of man requiring the intellect, the sensibility, and the will.” If this is true, it would seem that animals must be endowed with will as truly as man. This conception and assertion manifestly arise from oversight. The possession of will is not essential to activity as such, but only to activity of a certain species, so far as action is voluntary. The desires impel to action in their twofold classes, — the bodily and the psychical. Both these actions are the natural and constant effects of the existence of the feelings which precede them. Given an object which excites a sensibility and awakens a desire, and, if there be no diverting object or stronger counter-desire, the act to which the desire impels will be performed. The appropriate and natural issue of any excitement of feeling is action of some sort. The arrangements, or economy which makes different acts possible, differ from one another. The bodily acts depend on the psycho-physical apparatus in which the nerves and muscular system are conspicuous, through which, by the agency of the reflex-motor nerves, certain in-

Activity not
limited to
the will.

dulged desires arrest and relax the muscles that control the internal and external movements. The control of the mental and psychical activities by the predominant desires is effected directly by detaining the attention upon those objects of thought which are congenial to the feelings, and excluding others, whether they are introduced by the senses, the consciousness, or the passive memory.

§ 21. The sensibility, as emotion and desire in man, is *subject to great diversities in different individuals.*

These differences pertain to the positive and relative force of each of the original capacities of feeling, and of the positive and relative impulsiveness of the connected desires. Of two or ten men, each may be distinguished for some one or more specially sensitive susceptibility or specially active desire. A single bodily or emotional capacity of one man, though not particularly active or energetic by reason of the general torpor or slowness of his temperament, may be specially excitable and impulsive when compared with the general tone of his intellectual or spiritual sensibilities.

**Sensibility
diverse in
different in-
dividuals.**

These differences may be constitutional and individual, or the product of circumstances, or that result of training and education which is sometimes called the environment. Training, again, may be external or internal.

**Differences,
natural and
acquired.**

It may proceed from others (as parents, teachers, and the community) ; or it may come from within by the agency of the will, giving energy and supremacy to some affection or desire, one or many. To enforce and modify both, the law of habit must necessarily come into play, under which both the positive and relative energy of the natural sensibilities may be increased, and emotions and impulses of the natural constitution may be modified. All education of the feelings, or springs of action, supposes that permanent results may be wrought in this way into what may be called the substance of the soul, or its passive nature as distinguished from its active or voluntary forces ; and thus, in a certain sense, a new nature may be substituted for

the old. The possibility of culture, and its value, depend on this ultimate fact. Culture and habit are as truly potent for evil as for good. The entire energies are now and then concentrated into one master-passion, such as characterizes the saint, the fiend, or the brute. The appetite of the drunkard, the passion of the lustful, the demonism of the gambler, and the fiendishness of the revengeful, are examples of such a secondary controlling and irresistible nature or passion. Even when evil impulses have ceased to be supreme, their natural effects on the habits and emotions remain; to act against the bent of the new voluntary life. The man who is reformed in his will and the springs of his character may yet need to be reformed a second time in the make and proportion of his sensibilities, distorted and perverted by previous vicious indulgence. The *old man* which is corrupt in the tenacious impulses and habits of his indulged desires must often be made new in the second nature that must be wrought over again, under the formative power of the new habits to which his new character must train him, by the combined operation of a steadfast will, and with all the appliances of favoring circumstances, social, æsthetic, and religious.

The truth that man is the same in his original endowments of sensibility by no means involves the conclusion that all men are originally similar in the strength or relative proportion of those sensibilities which are essential to human nature; much less that all men, as we meet them, are alike in their voluntary impulses: in other words, the possession of a common human nature is in no way inconsistent with *very striking diversities and contrasts of individual constitution and character*.

These facts and phenomena lead us to another division of the sensibilities; viz., into the *natural and voluntary*, or the sensibilities as implanted in the constitution, and the sensibilities as affected by *the will*.

CHAPTER III.

THE SENSIBILITIES AS MODIFIED BY THE WILL.

§ 22. WE have treated thus far of the sensibilities as though they could exist and act independently of the will.

This is conceivable in thought, but never actual in fact. No human being who is fully developed, when in his normal maturity and under normal conditions, ever feels, except as his feelings are penetrated and controlled by the presence and activity of the will. All the sensibilities of a rational and developed man are in some sense voluntary sensibilities ; i.e., are more or less modified by the voluntary power. We discuss the sensibilities apart and by themselves, as we are forced to discuss all the other powers, because it is only in this way that we can discern and set forth their special characteristics. We do not forget, however, that, as we are conscious of their activity in our human and actual experience, they are always penetrated and energized by the voluntary power.

Sensibilities
not inde-
pendent of
the will.

For exactness we employ the three terms, "will," "volition," and "choice," respectively, for *the power*, *the action*, and *the effect*. Other appellations are not infrequently used ; as, "the voluntary power," "the act of choosing or of choice," "election," "preference," "purpose," "state of choice." *What, then, is the will ? What is the evidence that there is such a power, and*

Voluntary
power, acts
and effects,
appellations
for.

what is its nature, its conditions, its modes of action, and its effects ?

The earlier writers, whether philosophers, moralists, or theologians, usually and almost universally assigned to the soul two faculties only (viz., the intellect and the will); ascribing to the first the cognitive operations, and to the second all the active impulses, both emotional and voluntary.

“This power which the mind has, thus to order the consideration of any idea, or the forbearing to consider it, or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest, and *vice versa*, in any particular instance, is that which we call the will. The actual exercise of that power, by directing any particular action or its forbearance is that which we call volition, or willing.” — Cf. LOCKE'S *Essay*, book ii. chap. xxi. § 5.

“These powers of the mind, viz., of perceiving and of preferring, are usually called by another name; and the ordinary way of speaking is, that the understanding and will are two faculties of the mind,” etc. — *Ibid.*, § 6.

“All the actions that we have any idea of, reducing themselves, as has been said, to these two; viz., thinking and motion, etc.: so far as a man has power to think or not to think, to move or not to move, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a man free.” — *Ibid.*, § 8.

And yet, in § 30, Locke sharply distinguishes between “willing” and “volition,” on the one hand, and “desire,” on the other: “because I find that the will is often confounded with several of the affections, especially desire; and one put for the other, and that by men who would not willingly be thought not to have distinct notions of things, and not to have written very clearly about them.”

Dr. Jonathan Edwards thus writes: “God has endowed the soul with two principal faculties, — the one, that by which it is capable of perception and speculation, or by which it discerns and judges of things, which is called the understanding; the other, that by which the soul is in some way inclined with respect to the things it views or considers; or it is the faculty by which the soul is some way inclined with respect to the things it views or considers; or it is the faculty by which the soul beholds things, not as an indifferent, unaffected spectator, but either as liking or disliking, pleased or displeased, approving or rejecting. This faculty is called by various names: it is sometimes called the inclination, and, as it respects the actions that are determined or governed by it, the will,” etc. “The will and the affections are not two faculties. . . . The affections are not essentially distinct from the will, nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will and inclination, but only in the liveliness and sensibility of exercise.” — *A Treatise concerning Religious Affections*, part i. § 1.

Dr. Thomas Reid (*Essays on the Active Powers*) recognizes the current division of the powers into two, — the understanding and the will, — and takes exception to its correctness by appealing to the authority of Locke, as distinguishing “desire” from “will.”

Dr. Thomas
Reid's division.

Dr. Thomas Brown (*Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*, § 3) rejects altogether the distinction proposed by Locke and Reid, and insists on retaining the twofold division.

Dr. Thomas
Brown's.

Dugald Stewart follows Reid in his comments on, and allusions to, this distinction of Locke (cf. *Collected Works*, vol. i. p. 465, note; vol. ii. p. 495, note; vol. iv. p. 375, note; vol. vi. pp. 344-355). The first two of these passages are comments dissenting from Brown. In the last passage — which is in the appendix to *Outlines of Moral Philosophy; On Free Agency* — he distinctly defines volition to be an act of which the will is the power.

Dugald
Stewart's.

Kant introduced the threefold classification which is adopted by Sir William Hamilton (*Metaphysical Lectures*, xi.), which recognizes the phenomena of knowledge, of feeling, and of will or desire, giving the intellectual, the emotive, and the conative or impelling faculties. The history of the gradual development and final maturity in the mind of Kant, of this classification, and of its relation to his three great works (the *Critiques of the Pure and Practical Reason*, and the *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment*), may be found in Kant's *Psychologie dargestellt und erörtert von Jürgen Bona Meyer* (Berlin, 1870, pp. 41-65). It is singular, that much as Kant makes of the importance and the difficulties of “freedom” as the condition of moral responsibility, and as freely as he uses the designation “the will,” he nowhere recognizes it as a separate faculty which is capable of a special and determinate action of its own; but he treats the will uniformly as the impelling or conative power, or the faculty of desire and action.

Kant's division.

Professor Thomas C. Upham was the first English writer who distinctly adopted the threefold classification of the powers of the soul into the intellect, sensibility, and will, and made it the basis of an analysis and classification of psychological phenomena (cf. *A Philosophical and Practical Treatise on the Will*, Portland, 1834). The distinction and nomenclature had, however, previously become current in some well-known schools of Ethics and Theology (cf. HENRY P. TAPPAN, *Review of Edwards's Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*, New York, 1839). In the later nomenclature and definitions, separate appellations have been generally, if not universally, assigned to the sensibility and the will.

Professor
Thomas C.
Upham's.

§ 23. The ground for holding to a third faculty, viz., the will, is the evidence for such peculiar functions and effects as justify

and require a separate power to account for their occurrence. Our analysis of the sensibility has revealed special functions. It also enables us to conceive more distinctly, and to assert what man might and would be, were he endowed with intellect and sensibility alone. *We can do this most effectively by sup-*

**The supposi-
tion that
man had no
will.**

posing that man had no will, and inquiring what would be the products of intellect and sensibility only.

We ask, then, What would man do and become if he were not endowed with a will? We answer, Without will, man would be capable of knowledge. He could *know* very much as he now does, in every manner and to every result, except so far as the subject or the object matter of knowledge is furnished directly or indirectly by the will itself. He might observe all the objects and phenomena of the world of sense, with all the experiences and facts of consciousness except those included in voluntary action. He might also connect and arrange these observed facts under all the relations and forms of scientific thought. He could also *feel* in all the forms of human sensibility except those which depend on the exercise of will. He would also desire all those objects which intellect and feeling make possible. He might also act in every way except with the will: he might act with his body, and act with his mind; he might act with his affections and from his emotions, so far as he might be impelled by either. For simple activity, and even for effective activity, as we have seen, desire only is requisite; and desire with knowledge might impel to intelligent and instructed action. Deliberation also would be possible, whenever two or more objects were present as moving forces, each addressing some sensibility, and arousing some desire; and both of these could not be obeyed. The mind might compare the two, might hesitate long as to which were the more desirable, and, after many vacillations, fix at last upon one, and thus determine, decide, and in a certain sense choose.

Without will, man might also possess a *strongly marked char-*

acter. Each individual might inherit in his nature certain original capacities of feeling, attended by their appropriate desires, constituting his individually impelling forces or motives. This character might be useful or noxious, amiable or odious. It might be formed or moulded by training or culture, so far as his intellect should be formed to acuteness, reach, and energy, and his feelings be fixed by circumstances or society into relatively new springs of action. When, then, we ask whether man is endowed with a will, we ask whether he is more than a being such as we have described; i.e., whether he is capable of any other functions, and of any other products or effects, than intellect and sensibility might account for.

Might possess
a distinctive
character.

Many¹ contend that there is no evidence of the existence of any other power in man than intellect and sensibility; that what we call volition is only a stronger or prevailing, perhaps a more or less permanent, desire; and that the will is but the personification of man as endowed with an intellect which is capable of deliberating between two or more motives that conflict by exciting two desires, both of which cannot be gratified. Cerebralists of all classes, who hold that every mental and emotional state is the effect of some action *on*, or *in*, or *from* the brain, either for the first time experienced or subsequently revived; associationalists, who resolve all psychical phenomena

¹ ANTONY COLLINS, *A Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*; DAVID HUME, *Treatise of Human Nature*, part iii.; *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding*, § 8; DR. THOMAS BROWN, *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, also *Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*; JAMES MILL, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Mind*, 2d ed., with additions, chap. xxiv.; JOHN STUART MILL, *A System of Logic*, etc., part vi. chap. ii.; also *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, chap. xxvi.; GEORGE HENRY LEWES, *The Study of Psychology*, etc., chap. vii.; JOHN FISKE, *Outlines of Kosmic Philosophy*, chap. xvii.; *Sociology and Free-will*; ALEXANDER BAIN, *The Emotions and the Will*; *Mental and Moral Science*, book iv.; HERBERT SPENCER, *Data of Ethics*; *The Study of Psychology*, chap. viii.; LESLIE STEPHEN, *The Science of Ethics*, chaps. i., ii.

into new perceptions and experiences, wrought by inseparable associations of thought and emotion; evolutionists, who make the powers of intellect with its essential relations, as also the forces of sensibility, to be the products of the inherited tendencies and forces of the past, as they have been fixed and transmitted in and through the structure of the brain,—must necessarily resolve all the so-called phenomena of volition into the activities and factors of intellect and feeling.

§ 24. *The questions, whether there is such a power in man as the will, and what are its functions and operations, are very largely questions of psychology, being concerned with psychical facts or phenomena, the reality, nature, and conditions of which must be settled by the methods which are appropriate to psychology; viz., by a direct appeal to consciousness, and an indirect appeal to the language and actions of men. These inquiries, however, involve questions of philosophy; i.e., questions of speculative definition and argumentation, in which logical consistency in definition, classification, and deduction, is sought for; either in single classes of psychological phenomena, or the broader field of general observation, or among the accepted axioms or conclusions of science and philosophy. In point of fact, the discussions of this subject have been more generally philosophical and theological, rather than psychological. It is more satisfactory to men, generally, to begin with processes of observation, and questions of fact. It is more natural to ask, first of all, whether there are certain patent and unquestioned facts or experiences in the soul of man, to which our theories and axioms must adjust themselves, rather than to assume that certain theories and axioms are established, to which we strive to adjust the phenomena which consciousness attests.*

Testimony of
conscious-
ness.

We begin, then, with the testimony of consciousness, and ask, Are there any facts or phenomena which require or justify the belief that there is in man any special faculty called the will? The phenomena or

effects have been enumerated, which can be referred to the intellect and sensibility. Are there any additional acts which require us to accept the will as an additional power? To this question we reply, There are. First of all, in many, not to say in most, languages, there are different names for experiences or acts, which we distinguish as feelings or desires on the one hand, and as volitions or preferences on the other. These appellations may either run or shade off into one another in their import, and often be interchanged in their use; but this is no more than we should expect, if we consider that a state or an act of volition must necessarily include the element of knowledge and desire, and that the strongest and feeblest of our emotions, as we find and feel them, are penetrated and controlled by volition. It may be, and doubtless is, true that these appellations are not uniformly kept apart, or applied with scientific exactness or rigor. The fact that they are provided in the common speech of men proves that the common consciousness of men distinguishes three separate experiences with more or less exactness, and requires these three appellations to express them.

**Special terms
in all lan-
guages.**

The consciousness of most men also directly attests, that an activity of pure emotion, and an impulse of simple desire, differ from a volition. Not only do men discern that they differ in kind, but they distinguish them more sharply; the one as often running counter to the other as when, at the same instant, they are strongly moved by desire towards an attractive object, and yet reject and resist it. It may be said, and often is said, that, in rejecting an object desired, we are only the subjects of a stronger desire for an object which excludes the first. But consciousness attests not merely to the presence of one desire prevailing against and over another, as a psychical experience or effect, but also to a desire attended to, energized, and caused to prevail, by the soul's own activity. In more exact language, it attests to a desire which is counter to, and a desire

**Emotions and
desires dis-
tinguished
from voli-
tions.**

which is animated by, an activity or effort which consciously differs from the passiveness of any emotion as such, and the impulsiveness of any desire. The fact that the effect, as subjectively known, is conspicuous to consciousness in the form of a strong permanent feeling, by no means proves that another agency is not known to be present, as originating and sustaining this effect.

Self-approbation and self-condemnation require the belief in the activity of will, as distinguished from the passiveness of emotion and the impulsiveness of desire. These contrasted emotions or experiences, like all others, are founded on the knowledge or belief of some fact or relation which occasions or justifies them. The knowledge on which self-approbation rests is the knowledge that the man produces the state or act for which he approves himself. The fact that the purpose or prevailing desire, as it is called, is his own, is not the sole ground or reason of this emotion. He does not approve himself merely as the *subject*, but also as the *producer*, of the emotion.

This is pre-eminently true of remorse, or self-condemnation. Of all the emotions of which man is the subject, this is the most uncomfortable. The only possible occasion for its presence is the conviction that I am the author of the act or state for which I condemn myself. If it is an act of my body only, it is not my own in such a sense as that I necessarily condemn myself for it. If it is an act of the intellect or sensibility alone, it is still not my own as a ground of self-reproach. If it exists as an impulse or desire which I resist and do not consent to, I do not condemn myself. Here is an experience against which our nature revolts, — an experience which exists only so long as the belief continues that the subject of it produces the state for which he suffers, or rather inflicts, the offensive emotion. The fact that such a belief cannot be disowned or removed would go far to prove that it is founded on fact.

That civil government recognizes the presence and importance of this conviction as the ground of all penal responsibility, that men in social intercourse hold one another responsible only so far as they believe them possessed of the power of choice and in a condition to use this power, that all religious teachings and motives assume this to be well grounded, are facts too obvious to need to be urged.

These points may suffice as the decisive testimony of consciousness to the general truth that man is endowed with some power above and beyond that of sensibility and desire.

§ 25. To this general conclusion, founded on psychological evidence, *the following general speculative or philosophical objections are urged* : —

**Speculative
objections.**

(1) To affirm that the will originates choices, or voluntary desires, is to deny that every event is caused, and thereby to abandon the principle of causality as an explanation of phenomena and a ground of practical and speculative science.

(1) **Involves
the denial of
causative en-
ergy.**

Sir William Hamilton¹ has this in view when he concedes, "We are unable to *conceive* an absolute commencement. We cannot, therefore, *conceive* a free volition." In reply, it may be said, that to refer a choice, or voluntary desire, to the will as its producing-agent, is to trace an effect directly to its cause, and, so far, to explain, if not technically to conceive it. It is certainly to employ the relation of causation for the purpose of explaining events or phenomena. It is one thing to assert that an event is the product of a causing-agent, and another to say that every cause under similar circumstances is limited to a single effect.

¹ *Metaphysical Lectures*, xl.; *Discussions*, Appendix I. and A.; *Works of Reid*, p. 974, note U. It should be observed that Hamilton, in this connection, uses the term "conceive" in a special sense, as equivalent to explain or analyze or deduce from a concept or premise formed under the laws of deductive thinking, which in their very nature apply to a special and limited subject-matter; i.e., to those beings and phenomena which are subject, or are assumed to conform, to physical or necessary law

The one asserts the *fact* of causation, the other *its law*. Causes, as such, may be supposed at least to be both fixed and free, in the one case to be limited by certain conditions, and in the other case to be free from these limitations. The question is not of a *priori* speculation, but of justified truth, whether a free cause is possible in conception, and real as fact. The terms "liberty" and "freedom," which are so often employed, it will be observed, are both negative in form, and, as such, only affirm the absence of physical necessity. The use of positive attributes, expressing the capacity to choose or to act in the special and peculiar form assigned to the will, is often, if not universally, to be preferred.

(2) The existence and activity of a free cause is also asserted to be inconceivable or incomprehensible, as in the sentence quoted already, and in many others like it, from Hamilton. The word "inconceivable," as he employs it, cannot signify "incapable of being referred to any agency or cause," inasmuch as the effect in question, when referred to the will, is most emphatically ascribed to a force which is spiritual in its nature, and therefore self-active and pre-eminently deserving to be called an agent, a cause, or a productive force: it can only mean "incapable of being explained by an agency that is governed by fixed or necessitated laws." That all the phenomena of spirit act under laws which differ more or less from those of matter, is true; and that some of these phenomena may wholly exclude necessity, may be held without rendering the phenomena inconceivable in every sense of the term.

On the other hand, the existence of a free causal force with its special laws, as also its importance and place in the universe, are made wholly conceivable in a higher and more satisfactory sense by a reference to the relation of final cause or design. If moral responsibility and moral freedom, with the manifold relations and advantages which they imply, are the essential conditions of character and personality in the eminent senses of these terms, then the phenomena of

free choices are rendered conceivable, *first*, by being referred to a causal agency which is competent to originate such effects; and, *second*, as the existence of these free causes, in connection with causes that are fixed, is also explained by the relation of design. A more profound philosophy teaches us to conceive and explain powers and laws and events by both these relations or principles (cf. *The Human Intellect*, § 612).

(3) It is objected still further, that to assert the power of choice excludes the possibility of experience and forecast in respect to those events in which man is concerned, whether as an individual, or a member of the community.

(3) Excludes possibility and usefulness of experience.

It is confidently urged, "that if man can choose freely, and his choices are not made certain by the motives which meet him, then it is impossible to predict what his choices will be. The experiences of the past can throw no light upon the problems of the future. The observation of what men have been or done, under a given combination of circumstances, furnishes no warrant for predicting what men will be or do should these circumstances recur a second time. It follows that all knowledge of man as an individual, or in his relations to his fellow-man, — of man in business, in politics and literature, — is excluded; for no observations of the past can furnish any reliance or any instruction for the future. On this theory, there can be no knowledge of human nature, no social science, and no philosophy of history; there can be no philosophy of human progress, and no faith in human development. But all men believe in the teachings of experience, and count the knowledge which it gives as trustworthy and important: it therefore follows that any view of the activity of the will which excludes such experience is irrational."

To this we reply, that in point of fact, all the results of man's experience with man are held with a proviso that they will apply only to men of a certain description or character. We reason thus: if one or many men are controlled by purposes and pas-

Lessons of experience often held with a proviso.

sions that are selfish, ambitious, envious, etc., then we may expect that in certain circumstances such and such events will follow. Sir Robert Walpole held it as an axiom, *that every man has his price*; i.e., that every man could be purchased, or gained over to any cause, if you could find the temptation which would move him. The saying is susceptible of two constructions: it might mean that every man must be controlled by some affection, or governed by some supreme object of love or choice, whether he is virtuous or vicious, whether saint or fiend; or it might signify that every man is at heart more or less of a scoundrel, being controlled by selfish aims and desires, various in kinds and degrees. Interpreted in the first sense, it is an important principle in Ethics; but in life it is a tame truism so soon as it is divested of the brilliancy which it catches from a false light. In the second sense, it might have been true of many of the men whom Sir Robert had in his mind, and indeed of all those with whom, as a political manager, he proposed to have any transactions. But it would not follow that it was true of all the men of his generation, or, even if it had been true, of the men of all generations previous.

Sir Andrew Marvel dared to write of the men of his time,
 Case of “We are all venal cowards *except some few*.” The
 Andrew story may be true or not, that Marvel himself refused
 Marvel. a thousand-pound note from the hands of the lord-treasurer, Danby, who was sent to gain him to the cause of the king, using the words, “I am here to serve my constituents: the ministry may seek other men for their purposes; I am not one.” But his example suggests and illustrates the general truth, that what are called the lessons of experience, when used as grounds of forecast and practical wisdom, require as much sagacity for their application as for their origination. In other words, it is necessary first to interpret the character, i.e., the controlling choices and fixed dispositions, of the men to whom we apply the lessons of experience, if we would save ourselves from serious errors. Our generalizations extend only so

far as this: the man who gives certain indications of character may be presumed to act so and so, under such and such circumstances. We may then assume or infer that the majority of men, as we find them, do give these indications of relative weakness or strength, of rectitude or dishonor. It follows that the majority of men under these circumstances, and with the characters supposed, will act as we predict they will. But men in different ages, and different parts of the world, differ from one another in their springs of action, and therefore in their conduct. Moreover, the same men sometimes change their characters either suddenly or gradually, but so completely that their conduct does not correspond with what we should confidently predict or expect under circumstances fitted to test either, and our expectations and prophecies are sadly disappointed. Indeed, the very experience which we gain in applying the lessons of experience to the exigencies of life is fitted to teach us that we can neither safely interpret nor rely upon the forces and laws of human nature as we interpret and rely on material forces and laws. We confide in the one as fixed and constant, and as therefore capable of ready interpretation and easy application. We know the other to be variable, and are more or less uncertain in both these processes.

§ 26. This special question necessarily expands into the more general inquiry, How far is the philosophy of human conduct or the philosophy of history an exact science? On the one hand, it is contended by the positivists, and those who sympathize with them,¹ that, on the

How far is
history an ex-
act science?

¹ Cf. AUGUSTE COMTE, *La Philosophie Positive*; J. STUART MILL, *Logic*, book vi.; H. T. BUCKLE, *History of Civilization in England*; J. W. DRAPER, *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*; HERBERT SPENCER, *Introduction to the Study of Sociology*; *Data of Ethics*; LESLIE STEPHEN, *Science of Ethics*; JOHN FISKE, *Kosmic Philosophy*, part ii. chap. xvii.; *Sociology and Free-will*; J. A. FROUDE, *Short Studies*, etc., vol. i.; GOLDWIN SMITH, *Lectures on the Study of History*; JAMES FERRIER, *Lectures and Philosophical Remains*, vol. ii. 195, 255; WILLIAM ADAM, *An Inquiry into the Theories of History, with Special Reference to the Principles of the Positive Philosophy*, 2d ed., London, 1884.

hypothesis of freedom in willing, such a science is impossible. This argument has been re-asserted and re-enforced by the extreme evolutionists, who, like Herbert Spencer, seek to combine in their fundamental philosophy the theory of physiological development with a positivist or biological or associational psychology. These writers all either assume or contend that man is the product of circumstances as truly as any material agent, and that in his constitution, his environment, and his activities, he is either a mechanical product or an organic growth, to which the conceptions of freedom are as inapplicable as to the mechanical aggregations of the planets, or the physiological structure and manifestations of vegetable and animal life.

Those who accept moral freedom as an essential and distinctive endowment of human nature, construct their philosophy of history on the assumption that man as an individual, and man in society, represent two sets of forces, — the natural and moral, the physical and the psychical. They concede and contend, that, even in the psychical sphere, man is subjected largely, but not wholly, to necessary conditions and forces, and yet is also endowed with the freedom which exalts him to the dignity of personal character, and makes him capable of the responsibilities of moral life. Whatever may be the use which man makes of this freedom, and under whatever influences, natural or supernatural, — whether it be man the individual, or man as a community, — there still remains a wide and ample field for the operation of natural forces under fixed laws, in the tendencies and powers which belong to his physical and psychical nature. These, so far as they can be determined and predicted, offer abundant material for the philosophy of history, and the political and sociological sciences.

**Inconsistent
with fore-
knowledge
on the part
of God.**

(4) It is urged still further that freedom of will excludes the possibility of foreknowledge, providential direction, and spiritual influences, on the part of God, with respect to the volitions of men.

These objections are not limited to the teachings of Christian

theology. Every man who believes in a supreme Creator and Ruler, who is also wise and good, must necessarily raise such questions as these: "How can man be free, and God be supreme?" "How can man originate his choices, and God foreknow them?" "How can man be responsible for what he chooses and for what he does, and God exert an influence upon him, or give direction and control to human affairs?"

It is one thing to raise questions like these, and even to find it difficult or impossible to answer them, and quite another to conclude that the doctrines in question cannot be reconciled. We may have decisive reasons for believing that a position is true, and yet be ignorant of all its relations to other truths, or embarrassed in determining those relations. There are many truths and events of which we have abundant evidence, the relations of which to other facts and events are not yet fully mastered by human discovery and speculation. There may be some, which are not yet fully explained and adjusted, in which every man firmly believes, and upon satisfactory evidence.

The difficulties and objections in the present case are met and set aside by the following general considerations. The foreknowledge by God of the free choices of his creatures is not necessarily limited to the grounds or evidence by which man foreknows or predicts the actions of his fellows. Man, it is conceded, can foreknow with certainty those events, and those only, which are the necessary products of the forces of nature, or forces of spirit, so far as they act under fixed and necessary laws. For example: all the eclipses which will occur within the next two centuries can be confidently predicted, provided only that the cosmical forces now existing shall continue to exist and act after the methods and under the laws which at present control them. But it would be presumptuous to conclude from this circumstance that the only possible method by which God can forecast the acts of free beings is by means of the motives which necessi

God's fore-
knowledge
unlike that
of man.

tate their existence. It may be true, — at least, no man can prove the contrary, — that God, by an act of immediate foresight, can foreknow every choice of every free being. The self-existent Creator who imparts and upholds the existence and spiritual capacities of created spirits, who are themselves free to choose, may directly foreknow what each would choose under every conceivable variety of motives, and may absolutely foreknow what each will choose in fact under the circumstances which he shall assign him. Foreknowledge or forecertainty, as such, contemplates the certainty of a fact or event, whatever be its nature or the conditions of its occurrence. So far as God by his purposes appoints the conditions for man's activity, or acts directly upon man's free spirit, we may be confident that he will respect the nature of the being whom he has created free in order that he might be responsible and moral.

These objections are made and answered from the stand-point of theism, — the theism which teaches that God and man are personal and free, and that man in some important sense bears some likeness to God. Whatever objections against the possibility and reality of freedom in man are derived from a *materialistic*, a *positivist*, an *associationalist*, a *pantheistic*, or an *evolutionistic* philosophy must stand or fall with the speculative theory upon which they rest. We should never forget, however, that all these theories require us by logical consistency to deny what consciousness affirms to be true; viz., that man actually exercises the power of will, and holds himself responsible as the originator of his choices and of the acts which legitimately result from them.

These general considerations establish the truth that the power of choosing is possessed by man. Man knows that he is endowed with will as truly, — and by evidence similar to that by which he knows that he is endowed with intellect and sensibility. *To know*, *to feel*, and *to choose* are three distinguishable functions, all of which are consciously known by being exercised. For these separate functions three several powers are required.

To choose is a clearly recognized and distinguished function, for which we require a faculty called the will.

§ 27. The fact should not be overlooked, and cannot be denied, that the most important consequences follow the recognition or denial of moral freedom, not only in the theory of ethics, but in the theory of every science which has to do with man, — in both his individual and social relations, as truly as in his relations to God and a possible future life. Freedom, it must be confessed, introduces to science a new set of phenomena for its recognition, and consequently modifies and enlarges our conceptions of the axioms and ideals of science, as also of the subject-matter with which science has to do, finding a high place, and perhaps the highest, for the phenomena of spirit as capable of personality and responsibility in contrast with matter, which is capable of neither. It also introduces a new element into the explanation of all the phenomena which pertain to man, regarding the facts of his individual and social life as something more than the products of material or even of psychical substance and environment. It finds a place for consistent conceptions of duty and responsibility, of personal and civil rights, and for the individual and social progress of such beings as men know themselves to be. It must necessarily affect our entire theory of human progress and human history. Indeed, in whatever form faith in progress may be held, — whether as the old faith in a providential plan, or the new theory of blind evolution; and to whatever subject-matter it may be applied, whether to principles or institutions, whether to thoughts or events; or whatever it may be called, whether the philosophy of history, or political or social science, whether a sociology or a theodicy, — every principle and conclusion in this faith will be affected by the affirmance or denial of moral freedom as possible and real.

Freedom introduces a new element into science.

Also into the philosophy of man.

The positivist and the evolutionist think to decide the question of freedom by the summary assertion, that, without necessitating causes and unchanging laws, science is impossible, no matter what the subject-matter or phenomena may be, whether material or spiritual. To this argument the advocate of freedom replies by a direct appeal to human consciousness for the evidence that freedom is exercised in fact. He finds, also, that the elements of necessity and of freedom are present and conspicuous in all the phenomena which pertain to man, the individual and social, — in the facts of ethics and history, of conduct and character. He finds, also, that these two classes of elements and agents are adapted to one another, and suppose one another; that necessary elements imply free selection, and intelligent control, and successful achievement, and inspiring motives, while freedom supposes fixed habits, and growth in

The positivist and evolutionist deny freedom.

Argument in reply.

the strength and conquests of character, the building-up of institutions, and the development of science and art and literature.

He also finds, that in knowledge itself, as a function of the intelligence, there is an element and evidence of freedom, something more than the passive reception of impressions from the stirrings of sense, and the mechanical revival of the same by the laws of a passive memory : in other words, that even in science itself the intelligence is a spontaneous creator and producer, rather than a passive recipient. This fact raises the presumption, that, if the mind in its intellectual activities and products is something more than the passive subject of its environment, much more is it free in those processes which result in purposes, habits, and character. These are pre-eminently the effects of its own activity, so far as their *form* (that is, so far as the moral in them) is concerned; although in their *matter* they may obey the law of necessity, and be amenable to the most rigid and scientific scrutiny. The moral qualities of actions and events, we assert, are pre-eminently the effects or products of the soul's activity; although the individual objects which are presented for its election may be *the matter* to which it is limited and encircled, and by which its choices are in a certain sense determined.

It follows, that, if freedom is accepted, there still remains a wide field for the philosophy of history, and the investigations of political and social science on that side of human events which obey necessary causes and fixed laws. But if freedom is denied altogether, then man is subject only to physiological and social forces as they vary in kind and degree. As these forces change, so is it with their effects. Every thing which man intends or does is completely at the control of his environment, and his capacity to re-act under necessary law. On the other hand, moral freedom may be fully provided for, even though in its manifestations and specific acts it may be subject to those natural agencies and conditions which can be measured and computed by rigidly scientific standards. It is with these natural forces, as a partial element in human history and human progress, that the historical and political sciences have to do. These conditions of human progress are the field for probable inductions,—inductions which in their interpretations of the past, and prognostications of the future, may take a scientific form, due allowance being made for the free activities of individuals and communities as a variable element, so to speak, of both force and direction. It should always be remembered, that it is with these variable *quanta* that historical and political philosophy are concerned. But these forces are natural, and not ethical; the ethical element being always furnished by the individual will. Both individual judgments and feelings, and the movements which proceed from common opinions, impulses, and passions, can all be traced by science to the natural forces or tendencies which produce them, even though these, in their turn, are modified in their energies and results by the individual

wills of the human beings who re-act against them. On the other hand, the moral element in these phenomena can never be weighed or measured in the estimates of political or social science: it must always be set down as what is sometimes called a "personal equation."

In other words, while the force or ethical element in the phenomena of man's individual and social life can never occur apart from those events which are subject to natural law, the two can be distinguished as the free, on the one hand, and the necessary, on the other. What the man or the community thinks, and desires, and does, and longs for, what either is in temperament and disposition, may be the result of inheritance and environment under natural and necessitating law; but what each becomes, in ethical character, purposes, and desires, he is by his own free and personal will. Phenomena and effects of this nature, whether they appear in the form of single emotions, permanent desires, a prevailing disposition, or a responsible character, can only be the products and effects of personal freedom.

**Necessary
and free phe-
nomena dis-
tinguishable.**

It should never be forgotten, that if science positively denies the possibility, or ignores the fact, of these phenomena, literature, on the other hand, is abundant and positive in their recognition. If science denies these facts and their tremendous significance, or finds no place for personal freedom and personal responsibility, literature finds and recognizes them everywhere. In song and tale, in argument and appeal, in fiction and the drama, in the ode and the hymn, the free personality by which man rises or sinks in that moral life by which he is a blessing or a curse to himself and his race, is always assumed, and often asserted, in every form in which the inmost convictions and unshaken truths concerning man's nature can possibly find expression. Let these convictions be abandoned, and the fervor and passion, the humor and wit, the eloquence and invention, of all forms of literature, would die out; being withered and scorched into barrenness by the denial that man is a person, and as a person is free, and as free is responsible to himself, to his fellow-men and his God.

**Literature
recognizes
and requires
freedom.**

It does not follow, however, that there is an essential conflict or antinomy between the axioms or conclusions of literature and science, but only that literature takes cognizance of a greater number of relations than does science; and these a class of relations with which science, as such, need not directly concern itself, viz., those which grow out of freedom and personality. Moreover, if freedom and personality are recognized forces in the actual universe of limited beings, it may surely be accepted as philosophically possible that the universe itself, consisting as it does of persons and things, may be directed by an intelligent Person, without any necessary conflict or incompatibility in the agencies appropriate to each of these spheres, and according to an intelligent plan, after a law of progressive development. Such a theory of nature and of God would be in no sense inconsistent with the facts and

**The antinomy
between the
two.**

phenomena which science has established, including the law of evolution. While it would furnish a basis for all that could rationally be looked for in the philosophy of history, or a science of sociology, or faith in human development and progress, it would in no way be inconsistent with the existence and activity of free moral personalities, nor with a directing Providence, nor with a variety of influences of a personal and ethical character, which may be supposed to be exerted without interference with any of those material agents or agencies which are controlled by physical laws. While, in such a universe and its phenomena, matter and the sciences of matter would still occupy their sphere and assert their rights, spirit and freedom and personality and duty might still be supreme. Of the existence of such a universe, there is abundant evidence. The consciousness and convictions of the majority of men attest its reality. — Cf. CH. RENOUVIER, *Science de la Morale, Dernier Mot sur la Liberté*, chap. xcvii.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WILL DEFINED.

§ 28. THE general conclusion which we have reached, concerning the will as an agent, brings us to the more exact determination of its nature. We ask, *What is it? How is it defined? What are the conditions of its activity?* and, most important of all, *What are the effects or consequences of its exercise?*

We ask, *What is the power called "the Will"?*

This question can be answered more satisfactorily by first defining *what it is not*. This inquiry is of more than usual importance in the present instance, for the reason that those who deny freedom to the will often conceive or represent it as implying more or less than is involved in the correct conception of its nature and functions. In so doing, they charge upon those who hold it conceptions and conclusions which they do not accept.

(1) The will, or the will as free, is *not* simply or properly a power to execute or manifest the desires, or the so-called volitions, by words or bodily actions. In the language usually employed, it is not freedom or liberty to do as one may please. This misconception and misstatement of its nature arise from the use of the terms "liberty" or "freedom" in defining the power to choose. A man is free, it is urged, when he is relieved from some real or supposed restraint, and consequently is at liberty to do as he desires. If a man wishes or desires to move his limbs or to walk abroad; if he is impelled to speak or manifest or execute

(1) Not a power to execute the volitions.

his feelings or purposes, and no man and no thing resists or hinders him; if he is not disabled by disease, or paralysis, or weakness; if he is not bound by fetters, or immured within a prison, — he is *at liberty, or free* to act, i.e., to act bodily, as he pleases: this all that liberty can or need imply, and this all that the liberty of will can signify. If, on the other hand, he is in any way hindered, constrained, or confined, he is not free, he is not at liberty.

Thus Hobbes urges: “I conceive liberty to be rightly defined in this manner: liberty is the absence of all the impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent. As, for example, the water is said to descend freely, or to have liberty to descend, by the channel of the river, because there is no impediment in the way, but not across, because the banks are impediments. And though water cannot ascend, yet men never say it wants the liberty to ascend, but the faculty or power, because the impediment is in the nature of the water, and intrinsic. So, also, we say, he that is tied wants the liberty to go, because the impediment is not in him, but in his bands; whereas we say not so of him who is sick or lame, because the impediment is in himself.” — *Treatise of Liberty and Necessity*, WORKS, ED. MOLESWORTH, vol. iv. pp. 275, 276.

Locke says: “So that ‘liberty’ is not an idea belonging to volition or preferring, but to the person having the power of doing, or forbearing to do, according as the mind shall choose or direct. Our idea of liberty reaches as far as that power, and no farther; for whenever restraint comes to check that power, or compulsion takes away that indifferency of ability on either side to act or to forbearing acting, then liberty, and our notion of it, presently cease.” — *Essay*, book ii. chap. xxi. § 10.

Antony Collins writes: “I take man to have a truly valuable liberty of another kind. He has a power to do as he wills or pleases. Thus he wills or pleases to speak or be silent, to sit or to stand, to ride or to walk, to go this way or that way, to move fast or slow; or, in fine, if his will changes like a weathercock, he is able to do as he wills or pleases, unless prevented by some compulsion,” etc. — *An Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*, p. 116.

Dr. Jonathan Edwards defines “liberty” thus: “The plain and obvious meaning of the words ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty,’ in common speech, is the power, opportunity, or advantage that any one has to do as he pleases; or, in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing or conducting in any respect as he wills. And the contrary to liberty, whatever

name we call that by, is a person's being hindered, or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise." — *A Careful and Strict Inquiry*, etc., part i. § 5.

No man will question or deny that "freedom" and "liberty" are properly used in these applications. In one sense, and often in an important sense, man is free or not free; he is at liberty or not at liberty, according as his bodily or external freedom is limited or allowed; that is, as he has or has not power to act in the several methods supposed.

It by no means follows, however, because the terms "liberty" and "freedom" are sometimes applied to the relations which the desires or preferences or choices hold to their external manifestations or bodily actions, that they may not also be used for the processes or activities by which the purposes or choices are formed. The function of choosing, however, does not primarily concern the activity by which a choice is manifested or made effective, but the activity by which this choice is originated. Whatever freedom or liberty may be affirmed of these acts of manifestation, if it is denied, or fails to be affirmed of the inner acts which are manifested or expressed, it fails to cover the ground which is in question. The definition or explanation which is offered by the necessitarian does not concern the same subject-matter as the definition or explanation of his antagonist.

It should be here observed, that the words "liberty" and "freedom," in their direct import, are negative terms, in so far as they signify *liberation from* or the *absence of* something which is supposed or asserted to be present. The positive and appropriate appellation for the act or state in question is "volition," or an act of will, as distinguished from a judgment of the understanding, or an emotion of the sensibility, or an impulse of desire. When freedom is asserted of the power or act of will, both are said to be *free* from the law or relation of necessity; which is true of all physical agents and their phenomena, but is by no means

Liberty as properly applied to the intentions as to the actions.

Liberty and freedom negative in form, but positive in fact.

excluded from some classes of psychical activities. To hold that *the will is free*, is to assert that man chooses, and, in choosing, is freed or liberated from any and all of those limitations and constraints which pertain to physical agencies.

(2) The power to choose is *not a power to choose without a motive*. It has sometimes been represented by its antagonists, and even defined and defended by its friends, as involving an indifference to all motives ; and hence its liberty is sometimes called “the liberty of indifference.” This liberty has often been conceived as a complete independence of motives, or a lofty elevation above emotions and impulses of any kind. This is an unauthorized and erroneous conception of the power and its exercise. Like every other agent in the realm of matter or spirit, the power of will can be exerted only under its appropriate conditions. As man cannot know except knowable objects are presented to his intellect, and as he cannot feel unless objects move upon and solicit his sensibility, so he cannot choose unless certain objects are addressed to his will through both the intellect and sensibility. Whatever is known by the first, and moves the second, inclines the will toward a volition, and becomes the condition of a possible choice. But the motives follow one law with the intellect and sensibilities, and another law with the will. That their action upon the sensibility is necessary action has been explained (§ 18). In this the man is passive, while in the choices of his will he is wholly and emphatically active. He is the actor, and he alone, only within the limits imposed by the conditions or possible sphere of action made by the moving forces by which he is environed. Similarly, though not so strikingly, in sense-perception the sense-object, or stimulant, acts on the sense-element in the soul, while the soul acts alone in the perceptive process. In both cases the spontaneity of the soul is manifested, but most conspicuously in moral freedom.

The word “motive” is exposed to another ambiguity ; as it is used, on the one hand, for whatever moves or is fitted to move

the sensibility, and, on the other, as any object which is actually chosen, and is conceived of as having shown itself to be the strongest motive by having been actually chosen, i.e., by having, as it is said, constrained the man to the choice.

With similar ambiguity the will, the choice, and the volition are said to be *as the greatest apparent good*. The greatest apparent good may signify the good which is actually preferred by an individual man, and as therefore having become, by his act of choice, his chosen good, or as addressing the sensibilities only before choice, and compelling to a choice by first appearing as the best good to his individual comparison or judgment. In the last sense, the will, i.e., the act of volition, is said by some of the advocates of necessity "*to follow the last judgment of the understanding.*"

**The greatest
apparent
good.**

John Stuart Mill (*System of Logic*, book vi. chap. ii.) contends that there is an important difference between the fatalist and necessitarian: "the first holding that the character is fixed so that it cannot be changed under any supposed change of circumstances, even though the man strongly desire it; the necessitarian, that the character can be changed if we will that it should be. . . . Man has to a certain extent a power to alter his character. . . . His character is formed by his circumstances; but his own desire to mould it in a particular way is one of those circumstances, and by no means one of the least important. We cannot, indeed, directly will to be different from what we are. . . . Neither can others for us; so that it remains true, that, if *we will*, we can change our character." This is precisely the well-known theological distinction between *natural and moral ability* (cf. EDWARDS'S *Inquiry*, etc., part iii. § 5; also part iv. § 125), and needs only a brief comment in the form of a question: Does this "*if we will*" depend on circumstances, external or internal, or may it originate in the something in the man which is more than circumstances, and what these have made in him and of him?

**J. S. Mill distinguishes
the fatalist
and necessi-
tarian.**

(3) Nor, again, is it essential that there should be no motive to the contrary of the object actually preferred. The very opposite is true. The act of volition is an act of election, and, as such, supposes two or more objects between which the election is made. It is an act of preference; and to prefer implies that one motive is

**(3) Does not
exclude mo-
tives to the
contrary.**

chosen to the exclusion of another, two or more being in both cases supposed and required. To choose is, in fact, also to reject, both in conception and in act. To the conception and the act two motives at least are required, and one must exclude the other. When we say two motives are supposed and required, we do not thereby affirm that more than one should be consciously confronted, but impliedly that one of two possible impulses should address the choosing energy, for which and in which the possibility of the opposite is implied.

The only motives conceivable, which can excite or address the will, are objects in their *moral qualities* or *relations*; and these, from the very nature of man as moral, are necessarily presented in pairs and in mutual competition. Moral goodness or evil being the only results of every choice, the objects between which such choices are possible or actual, involve a choice which is morally right or wrong (cf. § 35).

(4) Not a power to choose to choose, nor to choose to choose to choose to act.

(4) The will is *not a power to choose to choose, nor a power to choose to act*. The assailants of moral freedom urge this as an objection, and press the objection with no little plausibility and ingenuity.

Edwards's argument against the infinite series.

Thus reasons Dr. Jonathan Edwards: "Therefore, if the soul determines all its own free acts, the soul determines them in the exercise of a power of willing and choosing; or, which is the same thing, it determines those of choice, it determines its own acts by choosing its own acts. And the will determines the will, the choice orders and determines the choice; and acts of choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct, of other acts of choice. And therefore, if the will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act" (*Inquiry*, etc., part ii. § 1). The absurdity of this theory, as he viewed it, he sets forth by the following well-known vigorous illustration: "If some learned philosopher who had been abroad . . . should say he had been in Terra del Fuego, and there had seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, that begat and brought forth itself, and yet had a sire and dam distinct from itself; that it had an appetite and was hungry before it had a being; that his master, who led him and governed him at his pleasure, was always governed by him and driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved he always took a step before

the first step; that he went with his head first, and yet always went tail foremost, and this though he had neither head nor tail, — it would be no impudence at all to tell such a traveller, though a learned man, that he himself had no idea of such an animal as he gave an account of, and never had, and never would have" (part iv. § 2).

This absurdity, or self-contradiction, is called the absurdity of the *infinite series*. The plausibility of this objection is founded solely on a rigidly verbal construction of the popular language in which acts of will are often described, as follows: When a man asserts an act of choice to be his own, or to be free, he very naturally says, "I chose to act as I did;" or, "I chose my own action;" or, "I chose the act because I chose it." This language, strictly construed, would declare that he chose the act in question, and not the object of the act. But this is clearly impossible, as it would require that each act of choice should be the object of some previous act of choice; and so on, *ad infinitum*. It is, moreover, obvious, that no man can choose an *act*, but only an *object*. It is equally clear that the choice of an object must be itself an act, the object having relations to every act which it solicits or repels, and therefore properly and naturally defining and characterizing such an act, but never yielding to it its own place as an object. It is equally clear that no man ever intended more than this by this inexact and incautious language, which has been so skilfully used in the *reductio ad absurdum* of so many replies on the side of necessity. This argument itself is easily set aside by a correct statement of the import of the language against which the argument is urged.

§ 29. Leaving these general considerations for and against the fact of will and moral freedom in choice, we proceed to define, in a positive form, the power, in its conditions, its exercise, and its results. We consider, —

Positive
views of the
will.

(1) Its conditions. The power of choosing, like every other power of the soul, is exercised only under certain conditions. These conditions are sometimes called the objects, and sometimes the motives. An object as such, which

(1) In its
conditions.

is wholly unrelated to the soul, cannot possibly be a motive. Whatever may exist, or whatever may be true or knowable of it, it cannot be chosen except as it is known, and only so far as it is known. An object of sense, or memory, or testimony, or faith, or imagination, must be perceived, imagined, or believed in, by the man who can or will choose it; the object must also address some emotion, and solicit or move some desire, either actually or constructively: in other words, to become a condition of choice, an object must be known as, or believed to be, desirable. The judgment of the mind may be true or false, the view taken may be exaggerated or defective; but whatever the object is taken to be, or whatever it is in "the mind's view," and with its responsive sensibility, it is as a condition of volition.

For an act of volition, there must be two such objects actually present or implied. The act of choosing, being an act of preference, supposes that two objects are present, or within reach and possible notice; though one is often, in the haste and impetuosity of volition, utterly overlooked and disregarded.

It is not intended that the act of knowledge supposed must precede the act of feeling, and both precede the act of volition. The conscious distinction and lapse of time are not essential: all that is insisted on, is the natural precedence of these two elements in the order of thought, the conditions being given.

(2) The act of choosing is an act *sui generis*. Under the conditions supposed, the soul performs a special and peculiar function as truly as, under appropriate circumstances, it exercises the functions of knowing, feeling, and desiring. Each is related to the others, and each, in a certain sense is dependent on the others; but each function is peculiar to itself, and is exerted by a prerogative and after a method of its own.

To the reality and distinctiveness of volition, consciousness testifies as distinctly as to the reality of any other activity, and

its testimony is legitimate and decisive. There is, however, this difference between acts of knowledge or sensibility on the one side, and an act of will on the other, — that the first are very often repeated or prolonged with respect to a single object, or group of objects, in order to a complete and satisfactory result, while an act of will needs to be complete once for all, that it may be carried into effect or manifestation. Thus, in order to the distinct and satisfying sense-perception of any object, many distinct acts often need to be performed, each running into and supplementing one another. The same is true of other acts of knowledge, as in memory or reasoning; each being required to strengthen and complete the other. Acts of emotion and desire also hold the soul in prolonged and repeated activity. If the feelings are pleasant, the soul cherishes and retains them: if they are painful, it is unable and sometimes unwilling to be rid of them, and the wishes, fears, and apprehensions which they occasion. It is not so ordinarily with an act of will. The previous conditions may be repeated and prolonged before a choice is reached; but so soon as a decision is reached, and the choice is made, the soul passes directly to all the acts which are involved in its realization. The expression or the execution of the choice calls for other activities and other emotions. Men hug and fondle and cherish their joys and sorrows, their hopes and fears; but they are bent upon acting out and fulfilling their purposes and impulses. This explains why acts of knowledge and feeling are so much more familiar to the consciousness than acts of choice, also why deliberation respecting the means is often mistaken for the act of choosing *ends*. An act of choice needs but an instant for its perfection; it is no sooner achieved, than it is displaced by reason of the other activities which it sets in motion: consequently the activity of volition is less prominent in consciousness than the activities of knowledge which the mind has constant occasion to notice, and the contrasted experiences of emotion which solicit and compel attention.

Attested by
consciousness
from an
emotion.

Still another reason may be given why this activity seems less familiar. Not only are the acts more transient — precluding rather than inviting repetition — than acts of knowing and feeling, but they are less frequently performed, at least with special energy and conscious effort. Man chooses but rarely in the eminent and ethical sense of the word. His busy activity is usually expended in thinking how he may execute his chosen purposes, or in the emotions and desires which impel to the execution or manifestation of choices already made. It is only in the more significant experiences of his life that he is distinctly conscious of acts of deliberate choice.

Against the authority of consciousness, it is sometimes objected, that consciousness can take notice of acts or states only, but cannot testify of *a power in action*. From this it is inferred, that, inasmuch as man at the same instant can choose only one of two objects, it is impossible that he should be conscious that he could have chosen or can now choose an object that he did not or does not choose. To this it is sufficient to reply, that any conception of consciousness is narrow which limits it to an observation of facts or phenomena, and denies to it the belief of a power or capacity to originate or produce phenomena or effects. Knowledge of every kind is more than the apprehension of phenomena. In all its forms, it includes the apprehension of relations as truly as of objects or acts; and among relations that of power or causation is prominent. The consciousness of spiritual phenomena would seem emphatically to imply activity and power on the part of the spiritual agent. The relations, one or many, which enter into or attend the experience or observation of psychical acts or states are determined by what we find to be true of ourselves. In the exercise of any power, e.g., of choosing, we affirm that man knows that he chooses the object which he in fact selects. In knowing that he chooses, he knows that he *can* choose; that is, in the

exercise of an act, he discerns a manifestation of a power. But the power to choose is a power to deliberate in order to prefer. It is a power to take in order to reject. Man cannot, in the nature of the act and its object, be conscious of the power to deliberate and prefer, without being also conscious of the power to reject.

In man's conscious experiences of psychical phenomena, the distinction between power, action, and effect, is verbal rather than real. Man knows his own acts as powers in exercise. He is conscious of an action as a power passing into an effect. He also finds himself impelled to every kind of activity of which he is capable. The belief that he has the capacity is a necessary condition to his being impelled to its use, and *vice versa*. When he knows, he knows that he knows, and knows what it is to know. When he chooses, he knows that he chooses, and also knows what it is to choose. If the act of choosing is an act of preference and rejection, he must know that he has, or rather is, a power competent to this alternative.

On the other hand, it is contended by many that our apprehension of the relation of causation and force is originally gained from our conscious exercise of psychical activity; that the observations of sense and material phenomena gives us only the relation of time in their before and after; and that it is only through analogy or natural induction that we transfer the relation of power to material events, and, as it were, project it into the physical universe from the psychical

Conception
of power derived from
spiritual
activity.

Whatever may be true of this theory, the assertion of Locke remains true, that we gain the clearest idea of power from spirit. His words are these (*Essay*, book ii. chap. xxi. § 4): "But yet, if we will consider it attentively, bodies by our senses do not afford us so clear and distinct an idea of active power as we have from reflection or our own minds." (§ 5): "This I think evident, that we find in ourselves a power to begin or forbear, continue or end, several actions of our minds, and motions of our bodies, based by a thought or preference of the mind ordering, or, as it were, commanding, the design, commanding the doing or not doing such or such a particular action" (cf. MAINE DE BIRAN, *Essai de l'Apperception Immédiate*, *Œuvres*, tom. 3). If this be so, the inference is more than justified, that, in consciousness, we are as truly aware of a power as we can be of a fact or phenomenon. It follows, that if man is endowed with the power to choose,

and if the power to choose must, in its nature, be also a power to choose otherwise than he does, then man can be conscious of the power to reject as truly as of the power to take, that is, to do that which he fails to do in fact.

§ 30. The question, "Why does the man choose as he does?"

Why does the
man choose
as he does?

is often persistently urged, as though a competent, or what is called a scientific, explanation of the event would require that it should be answered in terms of physical causation and necessary law. The demand implied in the question may be rejected as impertinent, if it implies that there is no way of explaining *why* the man chooses as he does, except by conceding that he does not choose at all, or, which is the same thing, that the motive under the law of necessity does not *impel*, but *compels*, to the result actually reached.

In common life the question is pertinent, having an intelligent import, and admitting a satisfactory reply, both of which are also entirely consistent with man's freedom of choice. The reply refers us to a choice already made, — a choice which is comprehensive and generic, such as animates and gives direction to the disposition and character (cf. § 32). For example, if a man has chosen to be a scholar by a comprehensive and permanent act, we answer the question, why he chooses to spend a day in study rather than in idleness or relaxation, by referring to the permanent choice which he has previously made. We answer the question *why* by referring a specific to a generic choice, or we explain his present or momentary choice of means by his previous or underlying choice of an end. But to explain one choice by another choice, with which, so long as it endures, it must have an actual and logical connection, is by no means and in no sense to deny the power of the soul to choose otherwise than it had done or now does, whether in the general or the special sense of choice.

But this question *why* is finally and fully answered by a reference to the power of will as its sufficient and ultimate explanation. As we explain an act or effect of knowledge by

referring back to the soul's power to know, in like manner we account for an act or state of will by reference to the soul's power to choose.

So far as the objects or conditions of the exercise of any power enter into an act, or are concerned with it, we do indeed say that a man perceives a tree rather than a horse, because the one is within his reach or notice, and the other is not. If it were urged, that, because we are required to explain why a man *perceives A* rather than *B*, we ought also to explain why he *chooses A* rather than *B*, we reply that the analogy does not hold, for the reason that an act of choice, unlike an act of knowledge, is an act of choosing *between A* and *B*. The proper way to apply the analogy in the case is to ask why a choice is made between *A* and *B* rather than between *C* and *D*. To this question the appropriate answer would be, that *A* and *B* were present to his thoughts while *C* and *D* were absent. It being supposed, however, that *A* and *B* are present, and not *C* and *D*, the only explanation why *A* or *C* is chosen rather than *B* or *D*, is found in the power of the mind to choose. The effect, i.e., the choice, is accounted for or explained by a reference to a cause adequate to its production.

Should it be said that this reference of an effect to its cause is not a complete explanation of the event, but that *the law* of the acting of the cause must also be formulated and given, we reply, that if, in the demand for such a law, it is implied or assumed that all the agencies or forces in the universe, spiritual and material, must act under the law of necessity, this assertion begs the question in discussion, and decides *a priori* that no laws or relations can be recognized, except such as control or direct physical force.

§ 31. The careful reader will not fail to notice that the terms "will" and "volition" (respectively, agent and action, cause and effect) are used by us in meanings which differ more or less considerably from those which are current in not a few modern discussions respecting the possibility and conceivableness of a responsible will and its relation to the doctrines of moral responsibility

Question
ambiguous.

Various
senses of will,
volition, etc.

and the conservation of force. In the most of these discussions, even those which are most conservative of ethical terminology (cf. W. B. CARPENTER, *Mental Physiology*, New York, 1876), and more manifestly in the treatises of such writers as H. Maudsley, A. Bain, G. H. Lewes, Herbert Spencer, and Leslie Stephen, the will is treated as the proximate originator of what are termed actions; and an action is conceived of as either a corporeal movement of some sort, including, or as some muscular or psycho-physical antecedent to, a conspicuous result. Or, if by some writers the psychical or mental element is adverted to, it is regarded as but a transient phase of the changing energy, probably the one nearly proximate to some effect adjudicated by the conscience or the courts. In short, every thing impulsive to action, whether spiritual or material, is regarded as equally voluntary, and referred to the will; the will being regarded as an intelligent force competent for bodily action.

Dr. Carpenter has the *naïveté* to define “‘will,’ or ‘volition,’ as a determinate effort to carry out a purpose previously conceived” (book i. chap. ix.). By very many writers, and in common speech, the term “will-power” is used as a synonyme for an energetic or tenacious impulse to corporeal or spiritual action of any kind. It is not surprising, that, with this broad and varied signification of the import of the agent, its function should be made to include the muscular and the nervous as truly as the spiritual and the psychical; and also, that, while there is a general recognition of the will-power as the condition of responsibility, this should be loosely affirmed of both the psychical and psycho-physiological, and even of the muscular experiences. Meanwhile, its special character and limitations are overlooked. Those who find the will everywhere in men and animals, and in all the activities of both, in effect find it nowhere as a moral and responsible agent.

As a consequence, its special character as a spiritual force fails to be set forth in appropriate relief. Much has been said, in the discussions referred to, of the supposed incompatibility of the doctrine of a responsible will with the doctrine of the conservation or persistence of force; as though the term “force” could possibly have the same sense when applied to the moral will and any mere impulse, whether mechanical or psychical. A moment’s reflection would seem to be sufficient to show that no difficulty can possibly arise, except to those who assume that all psychical phenomena are subject to the laws which hold good of material or nervous agencies, in respect to what is called the quantum of energy, as shown in kinetic phenomena. As against this view, the position has been taken by some writers, and urged, that the force of will is *directive*, and not *selective*. It may be questioned whether a force could be simply directive of kinetic which was not in some sense kinetic; i.e., whether a directive force must not be also kinetic between two directions of equivalent physical agents. If selective, and in no sense kinetic, it must be hyper-physical, and therefore removed beyond the application of the law of correlation. It would also

**The force
spiritual, not
material.**

follow, that even in the lowest forms of animal existence, wherever there is regulated motion, there is something like mind; that is, something that correlation or persistence cannot account for.

Mind-force of a very high type, however, does not of itself imply moral freedom, or will. Feeling and instinct, hope and fear, deliberation and resolve, energy and passion, do not imply or involve freedom, for the reason, that men might be completely furnished for various and splendid activities without the power of choice between impulses, and the objects which are related to mere impulses. Each one of these experiences might be conceived as occurring, in some sort, without moral freedom. The moment this is introduced or superadded, it gives to all of these capacities a new character, and in a sense makes man responsible for them all, even for those events which occur under the laws of nature, so far as the element of freedom can be traced in controlling and directing them. Strictly speaking, man is responsible only for his volitions, and, even in these, for that element only which is spiritual and voluntary; yet practically he is responsible for every mental, emotional, and corporeal effect which might have been foreseen as dependent on the psychical states into which he brings himself by his will.

**Spiritual
force not
necessarily
free.**

CHAPTER V.

EFFECT OF VOLITION, — CHOICE, DISPOSITION, AND CHARACTER.

THE reality and possibility of the act of choosing being established by consciousness, and with it the existence of the faculty of will, we proceed next, —

§ 32. *To the effect or result of the act of volition.* It will be remembered, as has already been observed, that **The result or effect of an act of volition.** psychical activities pass instantaneously into products or effects. The lapse of time is usually unnoticed. As the agent is psychical, so is the action and its effects: the doing is at once a deed; the activity, whether of thinking (*The Human Intellect*, § 52), or feeling, or choosing, is, or becomes at once, a thought, an emotion, or a choice. This is pre-eminently true of acts of the will. The fact has already been noticed, and the reasons have been given, why any single exercise of this power is brief in duration, and attracts comparatively little attention (§ 29). But if consciousness takes little notice of the acts of choosing, as acts or operations, its knowledge of their effects is distinct and vivid. Whatever question there may be as to the reality and nature of the activities of will, there can be no question as to the importance and energy of their effects. It happens every day, that, according as the choice of one or another man is thus or thus, the destinies of multitudes are determined for good or for evil. The stroke of a pen, the decision of a ruler, the vote of a majority of his counsellors, or of a Parliament or a Legislature, may be followed by a train of consequences freighted with good or evil

to multitudes. The choice of an instant may also bring to the man who makes it, consequences to himself and within himself, which are as conspicuous and important.

Our first attention is claimed for those effects which remain within the man's own being, and which modify and energize the springs of his subsequent activities.

The effects within the soul. A state of choice.

We observe, then, that *the act of choosing brings the man into, and leaves him in, a state of choice.* This involves a new condition of thought and feeling, and, it may be, of impulse to external or bodily activity. By it the man passes into a new attitude of intellectual judgment, which often modifies his individual opinions in respect to any subject which is nearly or remotely related to the estimates or purposes which his will has accepted. Whatever facts or truths are favorable will be welcomed, retained, and cherished: whatever are unfavorable may be repelled, and put out of sight. If the choice is permanent, and involves many special activities of thinking, it becomes a permanent underlying force, which forms the intellectual habits, moulds the associative power, rules the memory, elevates the imagination, and inspires the higher functions of thought and reasoning. A single controlling purpose apparently effected in an hour has wakened into life a sluggish intellect, and seemed to inspire it with the force and energy of genius. The history of many a listless and idling youth has told us of some turning-point in his career, when a new purpose, brief but energetic, has transformed his intellectual life.

The emotions undergo changes still more obvious, and often no less striking, both singly and in classes. By the very nature and as the effect of choice, certain natural sensibilities and desires are allowed and stimulated, and others are disallowed and repressed. The first are kindled at once to a flame, so soon as they feel the impelling impulse and favoring atmosphere which the preferring act of will sets free. The favored sensibilities are henceforth given up to the natural and necessary influences of the objects which are fitted to excite

Effects upon the emotions.

them, and they flash into the intense and peculiar energy of permitted and sanctioned desires. The sensibilities which are set aside are held in neglect or restraint whenever they solicit a response from the sentient nature, or come into competition with their rivals. The act of choice does not destroy or directly weaken the soul's natural capacities to feel in the several methods which its environment is fitted to stimulate or gratify; but these are persistently held in restraint and comparative inactivity. By natural consequence their relative energy grows weaker by lack of use and in contrast with those rivals which have air and exercise, or room and play.

We consider next those special actions of body or soul which simply execute the purposes. Upon these the new condition of the will acts like an elastic coil, impelling them to their work with a certain and constant energy. We have already seen (§ 23), that, without the faculty or the activity of the will, man could act with mind and heart and body, by labor, gestures, speech, and signs, simply because thought awakens emotion, and emotion kindles desire, and desire impels to action. But when the will interacts with these impulses, every choice which is reached, whether brief or enduring, whether hasty or deliberate, so long as it lasts, must necessarily regulate the actions by repressing and allowing the desires which are their impelling springs. "Appetite," says Hooker, "is the will's solicitor; but will is the appetite's controller." The will does not directly impel to action, but it regulates the actions by deciding which impulses shall prevail.

§ 33. The effects of choice may be more satisfactorily illustrated by two classes of examples.

(1) Let the choice be brief in continuance, demanding immediate attention, and involving comparatively few special acts for its fulfilment. Let it concern an object near or present, as the possession of a fruit which hangs on a tree, or the removal to a place not far distant. As soon as such an object is chosen, the mind is

(1) Choices
that are
speedily executed.

in a state of choice, of brief emotion indeed, but still requiring time. This state of will manifests itself by the immediate and exclusive occupation of the mind with the object chosen and the acts which are necessary to achieve it. The feelings which respond to its attractions are at once kindled into activity, and the man is impelled directly to all the activities of thought and bodily movement which are required for accomplishing his purpose. Unless this purpose is abandoned by a subsequent choice, or the realization of it is deferred, the man remains in this voluntary state or condition until the end is attained.

(2) Let the object be of a different character, as the possession of wealth, or power, or learning, or ease. Such an object is general in character, remote in time, and requires many series of activities for its achievement. It will not be denied that the purpose to be rich, powerful, or learned, may be formed in an hour, and with such energy as not to need to be formally renewed, and never to be relaxed and renounced. In such a case we have a subjective effect produced by a single act of volition which controls a series of thoughts, feelings, and external acts which continue for years, or perhaps for a lifetime, till "the ruling purpose is strong in death."

(2) Choices
that are
longer in
execution.

John Foster (*Essay on Decision of Character*) gives an example of a young man who had wasted a large inheritance by a course of reckless profligacy. He found himself soon after on a height which overlooked the large estates in land which had once been his own. As the result of his reflections, he resolved that he would recover them again. Turning away, he embraced the first opportunity to earn a shilling by assisting to deliver a load of coal, and, persevering in his determined adherence to his new purpose, died a miser. Examples similar to this, though not so striking, are constantly occurring. They are not infrequent in the history of educated men. Dr. Paley, when at the university, for a considerable time led an indulgent and jovial life, giving brilliant proofs now and then of extraordinary genius. One day a companion, finding him lounging in bed, surprised him by a remonstrance to this effect, "If I had your gifts, I would not abuse them as you do." The suggestion was the occasion of a new purpose, which to him was the beginning of a new life.

Examples.

It is conceivable that the object permanently chosen may be chosen simply for its subjective worth, as learning for its own sake, or artistic skill, or freedom from labor and care. It is conceivable that the object of choice should be the realization of some possible subjective perfection in intellect or sensibility, in other words, that ideal excellence should be the supreme or controlling end of one's desire and activity. This ideal excellence may involve moral relations: indeed, it always must with man. In respect to each and all of these objects, whether they are near or remote, and whether their realization involves more or fewer thoughts, emotions, and actions, the man passes by his act into a state of choice as its effect.

If the object is ideal, and implies some standard for realization, especially if it consciously involves relations of duty, this state of choice becomes the most important element of character. Character, *χαρακτήρ*, literally a mark, a distinctive sign, then a distinctive nature or peculiarity, has come in modern times to designate the controlling or prominent peculiarity of a man, pre-eminently that by which a man's individuality is distinguished, and usually involving more or less distinctly moral relationships. So far as this controlling purpose is voluntary in its origin and continuance, so far do we accord praise or blame to ourselves and others for what we are in character as moral. Indeed, it is only in the voluntary element of character that we recognize moral worth or worthiness, or the opposite.

§ 34. When the effect of an act of choice continues, and becomes relatively fixed, we call it "a state," because it need not be changed or renewed, and because, as permanent, it is contrasted with the many special acts to which it impels.

(1) The act originating this voluntary and responsible element in character may be conceived as never repeated. In such a case the entire energy of the man, so far as this purpose is concerned, would be expended in executing its behests.

The processes of thought and feeling and external action would all be moulded by the controlling force of this uniform and unchanging spring of action. They not only will, but they *must*, be conformed to its pressure. With a given voluntary purpose, the man must think and feel and act as the joint action of the two forces of his being permit and require, i.e., the necessary and the free (cf. § 27).

(1) Such choices may rarely or never be repeated.

In our theory, indeed, we distinguish these forces as twofold. The laws of man's intellectual and emotional nature are *necessary*. The laws of external activity under the impulses of thought and desire are equally fixed. The voluntary activity only is free. Within this variety of relations there is room enough for us to ask and to answer the question which has already been adverted to, — *Why does a man think, feel, and act as he does?* — and to ask and answer it in more than one sense. Even if we limit our attention to the involuntary in man, we find abundant and satisfactory answers to our question in his natural constitution and circumstances, in his physical or psychical nature, and in the agencies to which he has been subjected, and by which his habits have been formed. We may also find an answer, in part, in his voluntary states, which, though free in their production, may be assumed as fixed and constant forces, which, as long as they continue, operate with the regularity and necessity of physical agencies.

(2) The activity which originates the voluntary and responsible in character may be repeated again and again, and as the result, the character itself may be reversed, weakened, or made more energetic. Let us suppose the controlling motive to be the love of power. Let a ruler be called on to sign the death-warrant of one whom he fears or hates as an actual or possible rival, as Elizabeth, in the case of Mary of Scotland, or Napoleon, in that of the Duc d'Enghien. The decision of this special question may involve the increased or weakened energy of that voluntary

(2) The act may be repeated more or less frequently.

love of power which had been cherished by the ruler for years. As he decides this individual question, which tests his ruling passion perhaps as never before, so will he retain or abandon, so will he weaken or strengthen, the purpose which has previously controlled his life. In cases less striking than these, a man, by single purposes and acts, may renew or modify the master purpose which underlies and constitutes his character. It is only when a man thinks and feels and acts in mechanical and thoughtless obedience to purposes already formed, that the responsibility seems to be thrown back upon previous activities of deliberation and choice. But even in such cases there is a voluntary consent, of which he is fully conscious, to act in heedless or passionate obedience to habit and impulse. For this reason, it is true that every man is perpetually renewing his voluntary activity. In the fully developed man, there is not only the more or less distinctly conscious apprehension of that individual identity which is at the basis of all spiritual activity, and is the condition of personal life, but a more or less positive conscious consent to that identity of the voluntary purpose which constitutes his moral life.

Though a permanent purpose may possibly be renounced and reversed, the tendencies towards its perpetuation are many and strong. “Every choice,” says Goethe, “is for eternity.” First to choose for the present, and indefinitely, is in effect to choose for all the future. If the choice is for a limited period, and the man fancies he will reverse or abandon his choice when this limit shall be reached, he does this under the illusion that the motives which he now accepts may assume another aspect when he confronts them anew. But he has no ground for believing this. The motives to which he yields at present, with the implied purpose to set them aside in the future, are none the less, but the more, likely to re-appear, with a similar flattering proposal for another future, and thus, by their own momentum, to go on forever.

A state of
choice tends
to perpetuity.

The sentiment of Goethe is not the rhapsody of poetry, but the sobriety of fact. Every moral volition is a choice of some individual and concrete object with definite moral relations. No man chooses a generic object as such, but a single object as representing a class in its likeness to all. In choosing an individual object, he must choose all the objects which resemble it. He also chooses for all time, even when he fondly persuades himself that he chooses only for the present. But, even if he does, he cannot make over the future; for by his present choice he puts it one step in advance of the present. And thus it may forever remain, like the shadow, which flees before us, but which we never can overtake.

Second, simple continuance in a state of choice gives additional energy to the motives which originally prevailed. So long as any voluntary state continues, it presses into its service all the intellectual and emotional activities of the man. It will hold before the intellect the motives which it first accepted, to the exclusion of those which it set aside. The facts and reasons which might counteract or overbear their influence are likely to be excluded, or, if apprehended, not to be attended to. It follows, that, simply by force of occupancy or possession, the motives once admitted to control are, other things being equal, likely to remain. The man who has made a choice is also biassed by his desire to defend it. He is tempted to make the most of the reasons for, and to depreciate those against it. His feelings also are certain to be warmly enlisted in behalf of the one, and against the other. In the progress of the soul's activities of thought and feeling, it necessarily entangles itself with a more and more complicated network of favorable or unfavorable associations gathered from the words and looks and actions and events which have been colored by the commanding purpose which has long held possession of the inner life. Habits of thinking and feeling mature their fatal or hopeful facilities in the service of the dominant purpose. Practically considered, nothing is so strong, and certain to continue, as a controlling choice which has taken a deep and extended hold of the inner life, and has woven around the chosen objects of its devotion a network of fond and fixed associations. In theory, to part

with it is the easiest and simplest thing conceivable: in fact, it is the hardest thing to be achieved.

§ 35. The underlying and permanent purposes are the proper and conspicuous objects of moral approval and disapproval. Not that the special acts and emotions which obey them are indifferent, for they never can be. Morally, however, they are of consequence only so far as they renew and manifest the prevailing purpose within. So long as a man retains the purpose in question, he must act and think and feel as it requires. To change his thoughts and feelings, he must change or modify — i.e., weaken or strengthen — his controlling voluntary impulses. Conversely, inasmuch as by special acts he re-affirms the inner purpose, by the same rule he may change that purpose through some special and single activity. The ambitious or avaricious purpose may not only be weakened or yield when strained and tested by some single act of cruelty or selfishness which it exacts and involves, but it may be abandoned altogether in what seems to be a subordinate volition.

Thus far have we traced single acts and emotions to a more comprehensive and enduring voluntary state, which we call character, as to the purpose to be rich, powerful, or learned. We seek an explanation for each of these acts or emotions by asking, “*Why* did the man think, feel, or act as he did?” And we find our answer in this characteristic purpose which lies beneath or behind. We are led to another step: we ask again, “*Why* did he make the permanent choice which marks and constitutes his character? i.e., why did he choose to be rich, or great, or learned?” We at last reach those two comprehensive and alternate springs of action, or states of the will, which are contrasted as morally good or evil, into which all the responsible choices are divided. These purposes are within the reach of every man. They are necessarily formed by every man. They extend to all the other conscious movements. They concern every activity

Permanent purposes objects of moral approval and disapproval.
Why does the man choose so and so?
The question admits of different senses.

to which moral praise or blame can be ascribed. Though they are generic and comprehensive, and seem at first to belong only to the character as something deep and remote, they, for that very reason, reach to the minutest activity of the inner and the outer man, imparting to it moral worth, or the opposite.

The other activities of the mind and heart, considered apart from this supreme purpose, obey the law of necessary causation. That is, let the moral purposes of a man be so and so; let him be endowed with a given constitution in body, intellect, and sensibility; let him be surrounded by given circumstances of physical and social culture, and be confronted by certain occasions or objects of desire,—he will necessarily choose in a given way. The supreme moral purpose, sometimes miscalled the motive, and sometimes the intention, is that alone for which man is eminently responsible. In every other activity apart from this highest relation, he is under the law of necessity. In this relation, and what it affects, and in this alone, is he free. But this relation is intertwined with every other, and modifies every other.

It follows that the so-called liberty of will pertains to moral relations and to these alone. In every other application, the so-called will — i.e., the power to deliberate, to desire, and to act — is under the law of cause and effect. But inasmuch as it is impossible, that, in every one of these acts, moral relations should not be involved, we say of the will simply that it is morally free in all its activities and their results. It is most important to remember, however, that the only proper liberty of will is its moral liberty, and that moral liberty is defined as the liberty to choose when moral relations or moral qualities are concerned in our volitions. Of the character in every other relation, we may say it is under physical as contrasted with other agencies, and obeys the laws which pertain to such forces, including those of heredity, environment, of development and evolution, so far as these forces and their laws can be ascertained. It is all the same whether the agencies

**Liberty of
will pertains
to moral re-
lations only.**

are physical or psychical: so far as they are under fixed laws they are subject to the law of necessity. The fact that the free personality of man, or the free personality of the supreme reason, directs and controls these forces, does not alter the nature of the forces themselves, or the laws of their special activity, or the effects which they tend to produce. With these as its subject-matter, the philosophy of history, political and social science, and what is generally known as the knowledge of human nature, have ample scope and supreme authority under the limitations which moral freedom imposes upon them (§ 72).

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHARACTER AS NATURAL AND VOLUNTARY.

§ 36. WE were prompted to investigate the will by considering the sensibilities as affected by its presence and its agency. We revert again to the distinction with **Pity and fear.** which we began, between *the sensibilities as natural and voluntary* (§ 23). The distinction may be illustrated by the emotion of pity as exemplified in the compassionate and the unfeeling. Pity as a natural emotion may be felt by the miser, and cannot but be felt by him, so long as his attention is held to a scene of suffering. In one sense it is the same emotion as when it controls the man who yields his whole being to its moving impulses: in another it is as diverse as can well be conceived. In the one case it is the working of nature, which the man can neither eradicate nor wholly repress: in the other it is the cherished and welcome inmate of the heart, and it flows from a fountain that is constant and full.

Physical fear is common to the coward and the brave. It is impossible for any man to set aside or prevent the emotion which is the necessary product of anticipated evil, so long as the evil is thought of. It is no paradox to say that the bravest man may be in his nature the most susceptible to fear. Indeed, the material out of which the highest forms of voluntary courage are wrought must be a highly sensitive soul. More than one commander distinguished for personal courage would confess that he never went into an engagement without physical tremors such as only a determined purpose could overcome, and that he could only overcome these by controlling his attention, and

pre-occupying his mind. In the hero, voluntary self-control pre-occupies the man with thoughts and activities which preclude the suggestions of terror. The coward weakly consents to the dominion of fear by dwelling on these frightful images, and giving way to the thronging fancies of evil.

Character is also voluntary and involuntary. We saw that in

**Character
voluntary
and involun-
tary.**

one sense will is not essential to the attainment or possession of character, inasmuch as, without it, man might possess predominant sensibilities and springs of action, which in their impression and aspect

might be agreeable, or the opposite, and in their operation and effect might be beneficent, or baneful ; that is, man might have a character, even without moral endowments or moral liberty, and simply because he happens to possess certain individual or characteristic features of intellect and sensibility (§ 23). This character may also be formed, for better or for worse, under the moulding influences of his circumstances. It cannot be denied that every

**Elements of
character.**

man has, in fact, a characteristic physical organization which affects his physical sensitivity, and that this is derived from his parents, and through them is the product of manifold agencies — as race, climate, health, disease, and temperament — for many generations. His intellectual powers and acquisitions, his powers and his knowledge also, are to a large extent the products and the inheritance of transmitted tendencies and favorable or unfavorable training. Internal psychical forces, both emotional and intellectual, under the law of habit and association, conspire in every man to strengthen or weaken these impulses to a stronger or feebler natural energy.

But into these natural and necessary constituents of character, and in all the growth and changes through which they are developed, there is constantly present the voluntary element, which is always active, and constantly formative and controlling. This sustains and energizes those underlying and constantly present voluntary states which constitute the moral element in character, and give the moral complexion and moral importance

to all the special activities of thought and feeling and deed. We call them states, and conceive of them as fixed. They are more exactly conceived as conditions of active voluntary energy, varying in tone and force according to the solicitations from without and the re-actions from within. Every properly psychical state is in some sense spontaneous and self-active, the manifestation of individual force; but this is pre-eminently true of the moral activity of the character, which is constantly maintained by the voluntary tension and force of the man, and yet varies in degree at each single movement of his individual activity. This may be compared to the long and deeply rolling ground-swell of the ocean, which is lifted and moved forward from beneath with varying force, yet always supreme, although it is indented with myriads of ripples on its surface, or tossed into fringes and curls of foam by the wind which plays upon it, or by the shore against which it breaks.

“The law controls not only the acting, but the being, of the man, so far as this proceeds from the man’s inner act, the *disposition*, the conception of which includes in itself a fixed direction of the will, which has become habitual, yes, even the states and movements of the sensibility, the inclinations and disinclinations of the soul, so far as these in their turn are also determined by the permanent direction of the will.”¹—DR. JULIUS MÜLLER: *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, book i. chap. i. p. 56, 5th ed.

**Julius Müller,
on character
as related to
will.**

§ 37. As “character” is used in the two senses of natural and moral, so is “*disposition*.” “Disposition” (Lat., *dispositio*; Gr., *Διάθεσις*) signifies etymologically the relative position or adjustment of the springs or impulses of action, which is individual in the man. This adjustment may be natural or artificial, physical or moral, or both

**Disposition
as natural
and moral.**

¹ “Das Gesetz normirt nicht das Thun sondern auch das Sein des Menschen wie es aus der innern That hervorgeht, die Gesinnung deren Begriff wesentlich eine feste, habituelle gewordene Richtung des Willens in sich schliesst, ja selbst die Bewegungen und Zustände des Gemüths, die Neigungen und Abneigungen der Seele, in so fern dieselben wiederum durch die beharrliche Richtung des Willens mit bestimmt werden.”

combined ; it may be formed and fixed by nature under the law of creation, heredity, or development ; or it may be moulded, wholly or in part, by the soul's voluntary energy. Morally conceived, it is the latter and this only.

It is important distinctly to notice, as has been implied, that the activities of the will, whether permanent or transient, like all the other activities of the soul, though similar in quality, may differ from one another individually in *intensity or relative energy*, and consequently in the degree of their moral good or evil. As this energy differs, so will the effects differ in thought, feeling, and action.

Twenty men may prefer the same object, and yet the choice of each may be individual in its force and effectiveness. This is pre-eminently true of that permanent activity or state of will which we call the character. In one man this force is strong enough to overcome every opposing agency : in another it only yields to rare and special temptations, without being abandoned. In the same man at different times it may alternately yield and conquer. In this way do we explain the well-known facts, that the character may be upright and virtuous in its controlling principle, and yet be unequal to single and special temptations. It also explains how the natural misgrowths of a morally bad choice or character may remain after this choice has been abandoned. It also accounts for the inveterate habits, the corrupt and corrupting associations, the degrading and imperious appetites, the violent and hasty passions, the torpid and perverted intellect, the inveterate and indomitable prejudices, which disturb the very springs of the moral life, long after it has been brought under the dominion of duty by the energy of the responsible will.

Some moralists (cf. R. HAZARD, *Freedom of the Mind in Willing*) who hold
Theory which to moral freedom deny altogether the possibility of a perma-
resolves dis- nent state of the will as an effect of volition. They limit the
position into activity of the will to its momentary and transient acts, the
habit only. effects of which are seen in subsequent intellectual facilities
 or tendencies towards special modes of thinking, or in the special sensi-

bility of certain emotions with an increase of energy in their consequent proclivity to action. Character, according to this theory, is shaped by the will only as the will leaves its impress upon the passive or spontaneous springs of action. Character has its responsible cause and its originating force in single and separate acts of volition; but character, as a permanent effect, lies wholly within the domain of the intellectual and emotional habits. According to this theory, the responsible activities of man are occasional, not constant. He is responsible for what he chooses now and then, and for the effects of each choice on his habits and passive tendencies, not for what he is by the constant consent, — the more or less energetic but never-ceasing activity of his will.

The disposition, according to this theory, is the natural or constitutional effect of voluntary choosing: according to the other, it is the sustained energy of the man's allowed or energized volition.

This theory scarcely provides for the turning-points and decisive crises in the moral experiences of man, and their permanent influence upon the character and destiny. The decisive act in such cases, by which a man is often so greatly changed, is explained as only the beginning of a series of similar volitions, each of which has no connection of continuity with the others in the series, except that which comes from the slight proclivity of habit, so far as it gives an advantage to those activities of thinking and emotion which follow in the order of time. In the one theory, the man is conceived as animated by a voluntary energy, which is never remitted, but constantly manifests itself in special volitions which penetrate and vivify his single psychical acts and states: by the other, his moral life is limited to a series of acts that are connected only in the order of time, and indirectly mould the habits. **Objections.**

The most satisfactory explanation of the functions of the soul recognizes these as constantly and unceasingly active, and as acting and re-acting upon one another in every instant of our conscious existence. Scientifically and practically, that view of the will, with its exalted freedom, seems truest to reason and to fact, which makes character to be the constant energizing of the responsible will, and finds in such a will the nucleus and spring of moral personality.

It is important here to observe and repeat, that moral qualities, in the strictest sense, are ultimately affirmed of the activities of the will and of these alone. The will being the centre, so to speak, of personal character, and the ground of responsibility, affects all the other inward and outward activities of the man, and makes them all susceptible of moral relationships, and subject to moral judgments. It follows by natural

consequence, that right and wrong are affirmed of acts and states of emotion and thought as truly as of acts and states of the will, so far as the former are affected by the latter. We should rather say, it is because the activities of the will are manifested and known chiefly through their modifying influence upon the thoughts and feelings and actions, and hence, by means of the same, that the variety of subject-matter which is the subject of right and wrong presents a theme of such curious speculative and practical interest.

We affirm, with pre-eminent truth and emphasis, that the character is right or wrong, inasmuch as it is its supreme voluntary activity, its controlling principle or motive, which distinguishes the man, and manifests itself in every one of his special activities, whether of volition or feeling, of thought or bodily act. We apply the same epithets to each, — the character, the special volition, the single word or act, — whether they are more or less generic or specific. If he that hateth his brother is a murderer, then each special volition of hatred is more or less murderous, according to its varying energy. Similarly any tendency to the indulgence of specific emotions is called a disposition, as having gained the increased energy which is imparted to the involuntary impulses by means of repetition. These inward dispositions and habits of thought and feeling are constantly and rightly recognized as morally right or wrong so far as they are consented to in the permanent states or repeated acts of the will. The heart itself, as comprehending more or fewer of these elements, is regarded as the subject of moral responsibility, but always on the ground of the voluntary activity which is supposed to be directly or indirectly concerned in its general and special movements. The intellectual judgments, opinions, and habits, also, are tried by ethical standards, and pronounced to be morally right or wrong so far as these are supposed to be influenced directly or remotely by the voluntary purpose of the man. Last of all, the

Moral responsibility for character.

How far are men responsible for their opinions?

external actions, so far as they are under the control of the will, and are the manifestations and products of good or evil volitions, are judged to be morally good or bad, and are so called. In the judgment of the civil law nothing is judged to be bad which is not manifested in outward activity; and yet in its judgment, no outward act, however injurious, is bad which is not held to be the result of an inward volition, and also to represent the man as morally bad or morally good.

We scarcely need call attention to the profound sagacity and comprehensive wisdom of the familiar words, "A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Nor need we dwell upon the influence which these practical principles have wrought upon the ethics and jurisprudence, the life and the literature, of Christendom.

§ 38. We have seen that character includes two elements, — the voluntary and involuntary. This circumstance must be kept in mind in the conceptions which we form of the changes which it may undergo. First of all, the truth must not be forgotten, that the permanent moral condition which gives quality to the man, and enters into all his special volitions, is rarely and with difficulty reversed. And yet it is this which constitutes and characterizes the man as morally good or bad, and which gives significance to his changing and short-lived activities. This truth is recognized in the common speech of man, and in the proceedings of civil justice; in both of which there is acknowledged a permanent active tendency, which in some sort is regarded as distinguishable from the transient manifestations of temper, and words and deeds, while yet it is the living spring of whatever is good or evil in either. In this sense, it is often said, the man makes the motive, and not the motive the man. But, though a constant and irrepressible spring of good or evil, it need not follow that it is uniformly energetic and intense, or that it is at all times equally criminal or virtuous. Indeed, it is chiefly or entirely known by means of single acts or feelings, and these are marked by greater or less energy at different times; and, as it would seem from the testimony of consciousness, it is also constantly vivified and energized by being expressed in single acts of thought and feeling, of word and deed.

Changes and culture of character.

The man as contrasted with his volitions.

The involuntary blends with the voluntary.

On the other hand, however, the capacities for single thoughts and feelings and corporeal actions are largely dependent on agencies that obey the law of physical causation, conspicuously the psycho-physiological, and none the less really those which pertain to the representative power in the memory and pictorial imagination. Habit never fails to assert its sway over all these activities; and it begins at once to weave its network, even over many of the experiences which are ordinarily conceived as simply voluntary. The tyrannical and progressive character of many of the bodily appetites deepens our impressions of the elements in character which seem to be inconsistent with its freedom and responsibility.

The involuntary follow their own laws.

The mechanical part of our nature, whether psychical or physio-psychical, follows its own laws, however these laws may be modified by the will. Habits of sense and memory, of intellectual and emotional association, become more and more energetic by repeated and passionate indulgence, or weakened by frequent repression and rare compliances, and by the occupation of the attention and feelings with objects which tempt or solicit in a better direction, as these by frequent repetition kindle the better sensibilities, or confirm the more elevated associations. These movements for the better or the worse can, however, only occur under the energetic application of the central purpose, and may therefore indicate a change in direction and intensity for the better or the worse. Hence we recognize the truth, that different men may possess substantially the same moral character, and yet with an energy and consistency that is widely variable. Two or twenty men may be thoroughly selfish or avaricious, while yet the selfishness or avariciousness of each will neither compel nor allow him to perform actions at which the other will not hesitate. Differences of this sort, in respect to the kinds of actions which different men will allow themselves, and the zeal with which they will perform these actions, are enormous, and cannot be explained, except by the principle, that while, in all, the ruling passion is the same, the consistency and energy with which it is obeyed by different persons are variable in the extreme.

These principles also enable us to understand the relation of substantial permanence of character to changes in its manifestations, as also the co-existence of conspicuous weaknesses of character in a man who is energetically and pertinaciously upright in many particulars. They also explain the possible consistency of single moral weaknesses with substantial uprightness.

The necessity of moral trial.

It sheds some light, also, upon the possible necessity of moral trial to every moral being who is to attain to a perfected and secure virtue, inasmuch as complete moral security against the solicitations of evil may only be possible in its very nature by an ordeal of temptation successfully encountered (cf. BUTLER, *Analogy, etc.*, part i. chap. v). How this can be, can be easily

understood by any one who reflects on the capacities of the sensibilities so to engross the attention and to pre-occupy the energies as to constitute a second nature of aspirations and desires. It is certainly clear, that, for man as he finds himself, no way is open for progress toward moral health and complete confirmation in virtue but to withstand temptation, and guard against the solicitations of evil in the detail of his life.

Our analysis does not require us to give any theory of a depraved character or a sinful heart, or the explanation of its relations to the character and purposes of Him whom we have every reason to regard as morally perfect. We have to do with the constitution of man as we find it, and the possession by man of moral freedom, and his ill desert so far as it involves his own self-condemnation. The helplessness and disabilities of which man is conscious would seem to argue, that, in his normal state, he may possibly have been more closely allied to his Creator in the springs of his moral and spiritual life than he finds himself to be when he wakes to the exercise of moral responsibility. But of this relationship philosophy gives neither analysis nor explanation. It simply finds a weakness and emptiness which man would fain hope may at some time be supplied by strength and completeness, and for which humanity itself would almost seem to sigh, in its longings for deliverance from the heavy burden of a one-sided weakness, as truly as of inexcusable guilt. It is enough for us to know that the most efficient remedy for man's needs, that is known in human history, recognizes the weakness as truly as the guilt in its promises of deliverance.

**Relations of
moral weak-
ness to the
purposes of
God.**

CHAPTER VII.

THE INTELLECT, ITS FUNCTIONS IN THE MORAL ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES.

§ 39. THAT the intellect is more or less active in the moral experiences is universally recognized. Every man will concede, because every man is conscious, that he uses his intellect in a great variety of ethical cognitions and judgments. What is the nature, and what are the conditions, and what the results, of this activity? At what stage of man's development does this activity begin? What are the conditions of its exercise? What are the processes which it performs, — what intuitions or categories does it discern or assume, and what products or conceptions does it evolve? These are questions in regard to which much difference of opinion prevails, and sharp controversies are still kept alive. These questions concerning the functions of the intellect are twofold, — viz., psychological and metaphysical, — the one involving the other (cf. chap. viii.).

It would seem, at first, that all inquiries which concern those operations of the intellect which respect ethical relations should be purely psychological, — should be questions of fact and observation, and not of philosophy. But as in similar cases so in this: psychology leads to philosophy; and analysis leads, through definitions and reasoning, to principles. Psychology, as such, asks how the intellect acts in ethical processes; but it cannot answer this

Activity of
the intellect
in moral phe-
nomena.

Ethical pro-
cesses and
categories.

question without implying that the intellect also evolves certain products known as ethical cognitions or conceptions. Inasmuch, also, as in these psychological judgments certain categories are so applied as to be especially conspicuous or distinctly recognized, these also will be likely to come into notice in the analysis of these processes or their results, either as independent and original for ethical science, or as common to it with every form of knowledge. *What, then, are these processes and products and categories, and how are they defined?* The attempt to answer this inquiry involves the analysis and history of all the relations and concepts that are employed in Ethics. Thus, by a natural and inevitable necessity, psychology prepares the way for Moral Science, or speculative morality. It either creates or brings to light a *metaphysic of Ethics* as truly as it does the metaphysics of mathematics, or politics, or law.

Following these suggestions, we propose two comprehensive inquiries: What are the operations or functions of the intellect in man's moral experience? and, What are the products and categories of this activity?

§ 40. As preliminary to the discussion of these two questions, however, we must first raise the general inquiry, *What is the evidence that the relations or attributes known as right and wrong, virtuous or vicious, are real and important?* This preliminary inquiry is essential if we would satisfy the student that his researches have to do with facts and truths of solid reality and prime importance. Such a *reconnaissance* of the field of inquiry before him may justify and inspire his careful and earnest attention to subsequent inquiries respecting their nature. In answer to this general inquiry, we observe, —

Evidence for the reality and importance of moral relations.

(1) Moral distinctions are universally recognized. No man was ever known to exist, who in any sense could be called a developed human being, who did not recognize certain ethical distinctions as real, and esteem them as of supreme importance. We take men as we know

(1) They are universally recognized.

them, whether civilized or savage. Each observer can decide for himself whether he ever encountered an individual, or a community of men, by whom some relations of duty or right were not accepted and enforced. No traveller ever reported facts or observations which would justify the rash and not infrequent conclusion that a tribe or community of men had no rule or manner of feeling or action which was enforced and recognized as morally obligatory. The question as to whether this or that tribe recognizes any rule of conduct whatever, is often confounded with the very different inquiry, viz., whether the rule of conduct is the same with that of another tribe, or that of the majority of civilized and enlightened men.

(2) We find that all languages are provided with a vocabulary of terms which suppose that moral distinctions are accepted as real. These terms could never have been originated and applied so generally and confidently, unless the men who use them had believed the conceptions and relations to be real which these terms designate or imply. It is also incredible that they should have believed them to be real unless there were some solid foundation for this belief.

(3) The actions and sacrifices of men bespeak the reality and importance of these conceptions. It is true that the actions and sufferings of men for their faith in moral truth are not uniform. It must be confessed that men not infrequently act against their moral convictions; but even then, their solicitude in proving to themselves and to others that they are in the right when charged with wrong, or to palliate their conduct when they confess themselves guilty, is an emphatic proof that their beliefs in the reality of right and wrong are not shaped or reversed entirely to suit their conduct. When, on the other hand, men believe their conduct to be morally right, there is often nothing which they will not do or dare for their faith. Indeed, we may assert with confidence, that so far as man is in his normal condition, — that is, so far as

(2) Vocabulary found in all languages.

(3) Esteemed most important.

his intellect is unbiassed by passion or other perverting influences, — he judges moral truth to be the most certain and sacred of all truth, he confesses moral earnestness to be the most rational of all earnestness, he justifies and honors moral enthusiasm and heroism with the readiest and most ardent sympathy. In poetry, eloquence, and every form of imaginative literature, moral sentiments, when fitly expressed, have a grandeur and beauty which attest the universal convictions of men that moral truth is the most evident and most important of all conceivable truths. The human heart invariably and everywhere responds to the truth and call of duty.

§ 41. Next: moral relations are *not the products of circumstances more or less common to the human race*, but *they are discerned by the independent activity of the individual man*. They are in this sense independent and permanent. Their reality and authority are not derived from circumstances, but are affirmed and enforced by the soul itself, primarily for itself, and secondarily for others. They are not originated by special circumstances, though these modify their import and application. They are not imparted by education, although they are discerned by the capacities which education imparts. They are not first enforced by any authority external to the soul itself, although they are re-enforced by the authority of God and man.

Those who hold that moral relations are derived from external circumstances and influences, trace their origin to one or more of three sources; viz., *the will of God, the authority of the civil ruler, or the influence of education and public sentiment*. They assert that the intellect accepts as right and wrong (1) whatever God does, or is supposed to, command or forbid, simply because he commands or forbids it; or (2) whatever the civil ruler commands or forbids, simply because the law requires or prohibits; or (3) whatever men in the family, the school, or by public opinion, teach

Originate in
the individual
man.

Referred by
many to one
or more of
three
sources:
(1) the will
of God,
(2) the civil
law,
(3) public
sentiment.

and enforce as necessary to secure, or certain to forfeit, their favor. Those who deny that these relations are derived from man's own constitution, and enforced upon himself by his individual authority, assert that they originate in one or all of these three sources; indeed, that these are the only possible external originals from which they can be derived: that is, if moral distinctions are not the necessary products of the individual soul, they must be the creatures of *education, society, law, or religion.*

The following from Locke's *Essay*, book ii. chap. xxviii., represents this theory in all its forms:—

“§ 5. Moral good and evil, then, is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law whereby good and evil are chosen as from the will and power of the Law-maker; which good and evil, pleasure or pain, attending our observance or breach of the law, by the decree of the Law-maker is what we call reward or punishment.”

“§ 7. The laws that man generally refer their actions to, to judge of their rectitude or obliquity, seem to be these three: (1) the divine law; (2) the civil law; (3) the law of opinion or reputation, if I may so call it.”

“§ 8. First the divine law, whereby I mean that law which God has set to the actions of men, whether promulgated to them by the light of nature or the voice of revelation.” “This is the only true touchstone of moral rectitude,” etc.

“§ 9. The civil law—the rule set by the commonwealth to the actions of those who belong to it—is another rule to which men refer their actions, to judge whether they be criminal or no.”

“§ 10. The law of opinion or reputation,” etc.

“§ 11. That this is the common measure of virtue and vice will appear to any one who considers, that though that passes for vice in one country which is counted a virtue, or at least not vice, in another, yet everywhere virtue and praise, vice and blame, go together . . . And though perhaps by the different temper, education, fashion, maxims, or interest of different sorts of men, it fell out that what was thought praiseworthy in one place escaped not censure in another; and so in different societies, virtues and vices are changed; yet as to the main, they for the most part kept the same everywhere.”

It is to be remembered, in justice to Locke, that, when his attention was called to the language which he had used in respect to the divine law and the law of opinion, he insisted that this was consistent with his holding to a law or light of nature. It would seem, however, from the ambiguity of his own language, that he did not carefully distinguish between the law as the

originator, and as what he elsewhere calls "the sole touchstone or the sole measure of the rectitude of our actions." — Book ii. chap. xxviii. § 8.

§ 42. Against this theory, in whatever form its principle may be urged, we assert, —

I. Moral distinctions are not constituted by the enactments of the civil ruler. This was the well-known doctrine of Hobbes, having been stated by him with singular clearness, and applied with unsparing rigor to its extremest logical consequences. "Therefore, before the names of just and unjust can have place, there must be some coercive power to compel men equally to the performance of their covenants by the terror of some punishment greater than the benefits they expect by the breach of their covenant, and to make good that propriety which by mutual contract men acquire, in recompense of the universal right they abandon; and such power there is none before the erection of a commonwealth." — *Leviathan*, part i. chap. xv.

I. Moral distinctions do not originate in the civil law.

In support of this doctrine it is urged, (1) To many persons the enactments, usually the prohibitions, of the civil law, are the only recognized measures or standards of right and wrong. Such persons, it is contended, know actions as moral, only so far as they know them to be commanded or forbidden by positive law. Let this be conceded in some instances to be true, it does not follow that these persons might not find and apply another standard, viz., that which is furnished from the soul itself. The failure of such to use their powers so as to discover a law of duty within themselves, by no means proves that this law does not exist, and cannot be found. A similar incapacity or failure not infrequently occurs with respect to mathematical quantities. Inattention, through intellectual torpor or moral perverseness, may incapacitate the intellect to discern mathematical relations. It by no means follows, however, that these relations were originated by the makers of mathematical text-books, or devised by mathematical pedants.

Reasons given: (1) To some it is the only recognized standard.

It is urged still further, (2) that in respect to many classes of actions the civil law is creative of moral quality, inasmuch as actions which are forbidden by one government, and thereby have become morally reprehensible, under another are commanded or permitted, and thereby are made morally right. These facts cannot be denied; but the truth is equally obvious, that, in the instances supposed, the actions supposed are morally indifferent before they are commanded or forbidden, while it is not indifferent that some course of action should be prescribed by positive command, or that a ruler should be respected whenever he issues such a command. Moreover, the positive command, in every instance supposed, respects the external conduct alone. Those who hold that moral relations are independent of positive authority would concede that morality, so far as civil society is concerned, may be in great measure conventional and positive. But to the assertion that the obligation of one law or another is created by the enactment of the law, the reply is pertinent, Whence, then, comes the general obligation to recognize civil enactments as binding so soon as they are enacted? If the ruler can appeal to no authority beyond the law itself, and if he can enforce no obligation higher than the dread of the fine or imprisonment, or whatever else of positive evil he is able to inflict, then the moral obligation to obey the law must be resolved into the fear of superior strength. If right is created by the law, then right is created by might.

§ 43. Against this doctrine the following reasons are decisive: (1) Obedience to the law is enforced by an authority beyond and higher than the law itself. Whether the appeal is made to conscience, to allegiance to God, to the public welfare, or to the judgment of mankind, whether or not an oath is employed for the enforcement of the law, it cannot be questioned that some standard of judgment, or motive of enforcement, is employed other than those furnished by the law

(2) Certain actions are determined by statute.

Reasons against: (1) Obedience to law is enforced by higher authority.

itself and its threatened penalty. Even Hobbes is frank and logical enough to concede that the "original of justice is in the making of covenants," and "the nature of justice consisteth in keeping valid covenants," i.e., in the practical necessity for mutual confidence. Upon this practical necessity of good faith to this end, rests the entire fabric of that commonwealth which makes it possible that "the names of just and unjust can have place."

(2) Laws themselves are judged and criticised as morally right or wrong: at least, it cannot be questioned that they are constantly approved or condemned as morally beneficent or harmful. It is obvious that the moral quality of laws can only be tested and judged by a criterion higher than the laws themselves. Such a criterion or standard can never itself be a creature of the law.

(2) Laws themselves are judged to be right or wrong.

(3) Laws may be resisted and disobeyed whenever they contradict the law of duty; and rulers themselves, under extreme circumstances, may be deposed from authority. We do not here inquire when this may be done rightfully, nor under what circumstances either individual disobedience or a popular revolution may be allowed. We only recognize the truth, that disobedience or resistance to the civil law may, under certain circumstances, be justified; and simply urge, that if laws may at any time be resisted, and rulers may be deposed, then duty and obligation are not the creatures of either the law or the ruler.

(3) Laws are rightfully resisted and disobeyed.

§ 44. II. Moral distinctions are not originated or enforced, solely by the opinions and feelings of men in society. This has been held by not a few philosophers, and has of late, by the aid of other elements, been expanded into a plausible and prevalent theory. Among the earliest and most distinguished of its advocates is Adam Smith, who contends, in "The Theory of Moral Sentiments," that the standards of right and wrong are derived solely from the supposed judgments and feelings

II. Moral relations do not originate with society. Adam Smith's theory.

of our fellow-men in respect to our own feelings and actions, and enforced by *our sympathy* with these supposed feelings and judgments, and consequently that human society is the necessary condition of all moral judgments and feelings. He goes so far as to assert, that “were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, or the propriety or demerit of his own character, or the beauty and deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty and deformity of his own face. . . . Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before” (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, part iii. chap. i.).

The process by which this “mirror” is formed by each individual is thus explained. It is in society only that men can learn that their fellow-men are pleased or displeased with their feelings and actions. Slowly, but surely, they connect their favorable or unfavorable judgments and feelings with the conduct and purposes which occasion them. With these feelings and judgments of others they naturally and necessarily sympathize, whether these are favorable or unfavorable to themselves. In process of time they learn to substitute, in place of the living men and women about them, “*an abstract man within their breasts*,” which is the representative or the personification of these imagined judgments and feelings of their fellow-men in general.

The associationalists of the present day adopt this theory in its principle, finding additional evidence for its truth in the larger room and wider importance which they give to “inseparable associations” in the formation and structure of all the more important psychical products. To those who explain the rise and growth of these products by the process of evolution, their genesis from social influences is more readily accounted for; while, to those who explain both association and evolution by brain or nerve differentiations, the theory of the social origin

of ethical phenomena is placed on a still broader basis. That a strong current of thinking at the present day sets in the direction of deriving all moral relations from social forces, substantially after the theory of Adam Smith, is too well known to be denied or questioned (cf. ALEXANDER BAIN, *Mental and Moral Science*; HERBERT SPENCER, *Data of Ethics*; CHARLES DARWIN, *Descent of Man*; G. H. LEWES, *Problems of Life and Mind*; Professor W. K. CLIFFORD, *Essays and Lectures*; JOHN FISKE, *Cosmical Philosophy*; LESLIE STEPHEN, *The Science of Ethics*). The theory, in its fundamental principle, is the same, whether "environment," "the tribal self," "social tissue," or Adam Smith's "abstract man within the breast," or any other phrase, is employed to designate this social conscience or standard of duty.¹

It is not essential that the theory that moral relations are social in their origin should include all the features of the theories of Adam Smith or the associationalistic evolutionists. It may be held in a simpler form by substituting the so-called law of opinion for the civil law, and resolving moral sanctions into the hope or fear of the favor or disfavor of our fellow-men in an unorganized community.

But in whatever form this theory is held, it has the same weakness with the bold assertion of Hobbes, that the enactments of civil rule create and enforce moral distinctions. It rests upon the same arguments for its support, and it is exposed to the same fatal objections. That the opinions and feelings of our fellow-men in society have much to do in modifying and enforcing the moral codes and the moral feelings of man, cannot be doubted, so far as these concern their outward conduct; but that they cannot in any sense originate or enforce them, is evident from the considerations already referred to in discussing the kindred theory.

Objections to
the social
theory.

¹ For the actual influence of social forces in modifying moral standards of feeling and conduct, cf. Part I. chap. xiv, §§ 93-96.

There are judgments and feelings of duty to which no number of men, and no force of their liking or disliking, can possibly give currency or force as righteous and meritorious: there are other judgments and feelings which commend themselves to universal assent and sympathy as soon as they are made manifest. The one class *is*, and the other class *is not*, in harmony with that nature of the individual man which tends to form and reform social judgments and feelings, however strong are the interests, or false the judgments, however perverse are the sympathies, and unreasonable the likes and dislikes, of others. In every practical struggle between the individual and the community, concerning what is morally true, the individual appeals to the better judgment and the honest emotions of his fellow-men as individuals. Herein lies the importance and dignity of the right of private judgment, and the authority and responsibility of the individual conscience.

§ 45. The so-called evolution theory of Ethics is properly classed as one of the theories which derive moral distinctions conspicuously from society by the operation of association, and for the reason that its advocates confessedly make these distinctions to be the products of environment.

Though this environment in its earlier stages is held by them to be material and nervous, yet when it reaches its highest forms it also becomes social; i.e., so soon as material phenomena are developed into the experiences of consciousness. The Spencerian theory differs from the theory of Adam Smith in the following particulars: to the psychical law of the association of thoughts and feelings it superadds, as did Hartley, the physiological relations of the nervous and cerebral apparatus, while it differs from Hartley in accounting for both by the assumed operation of the broader law of evolution from simpler to more complex forms of being and activity. By this formula is explained, in the first place, the emergence into being of the *subject-matter* of moral approval; viz., the benevolent or altruistic affection. Its development is thus traced. In the lower forms of existence every impulse would necessarily terminate in the individual self. This must continue to be the case so long as any being is simple in its structure, and so long as it is surrounded by a simple environment with which its communications are rapid and direct. But as the subject becomes more and more complex in structure, and indirect in its communications with its

**Relation of
evolutionist
to the social
theory.**

**Herbert
Spencer and
Adam Smith.**

surroundings, it finds that its most important blessings come to it more and more obviously through the medium or influence of other beings than itself. As a consequence, it gradually associates these other beings with all its enjoyments, as sources of blessing to itself, and learns in some sort to regard them as enlargements of its own personal essence, till at a certain time, under the laws of association, re-enforced as these are by cerebral action, it learns to identify the general well-being with its individual interest. When this process is complete, the common good is inseparably connected with its own highest good. By these successive steps, there emerges a powerful secondary interest in the well-being of others, which at last becomes such a controlling affection as often to take the place of, and dominate over, the primary and individual impulses, and finally to generate that pure and disinterested altruism, which, in the best sense of the word, "seeketh not its own." All the affections, it should be remembered, whether self-terminating or altruistic, are the products of the unconscious experiences, in the combinations of which, not merely the thoughts and feelings are united, but material particles and agents also co-act and combine. Heredity also comes in to transmit to succeeding generations the tendencies or powers acquired by the new cerebral stuff which is generated from past human experiences in forms more positive and pure than could possibly be attained by the brains of previous generations. Thus altruism, or unselfish love, is the secondary growth of the indirect associations of complicated social life, as these have been strained through the more and more refined nervous apparatus of many successive generations.

**Growth of
altruism.**

The objective law or standard of duty is also generated by similar processes. In Spencer's own language, "Though the moral intuitions are the results of accumulated experiences of utility, gradually organized and inherited, they have come to be quite independent of conscious experience." So far and so long as these processes go on within the observation of consciousness, they obey the laws of association and sympathy as expounded by Adam Smith, except that sympathy, according to Spencer, is itself a secondary or derivative affection, whereas, with Smith, it is an original endowment of man. So far as it depends on the law of evolution working in and upon the nervous system in which it roots, it is thus explained by Mr. Spencer: "Just in the same way that I believe the intuition of space possessed by any living individual to have arisen from organized and consolidated experiences of all antecedent individuals, who bequeath to him their slowly developed nervous organizations . . . so do I believe that the experiences of utility, organized and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding nervous modifications, which, by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition."—*Letter to Mr. J. S. Mill.*

**Conception
and law of
duty, how
generated.**

It is worthy of notice that this theory also provides for a constant tendency towards what it calls an *absolute morality* under the law of evolution, which shall finally attain to a perfect objective standard and subjective achievement of duty at the end of its progressive march. If this anticipation, or, properly conceived, this law of evolution in morals, is to be relied on, it would seem that Mr. Spencer himself has somehow attained to an adequate conception, in general, of what this absolute morality is finally to become, at least in its general features; and that he is also certain, that, toward this as its end, the universe is moving, and in it is destined to rest. We will concede, that in many subordinate particulars or details, both of feeling and act, the law of duty and the fact of duty are as yet neither complete, nor perfect, nor absolute; but we must still assume that the conception of what absolute morality is, or ought to be, must have been already attained, if we can form any conception of either morality or evolution, and recognize these conceptions as the *ultima*, beyond which the conceptions of human duty cannot go.

In other words, the evolutionist's theory of morals presupposes or presumes that the conception of perfect moral excellence as an ideal is the end or aim to which all social arrangements and influences tend and move, even though it be conceded that this has not yet been made real. But how did it come into being as a thought, if it were not previously existing as a fact, or if the elements of which it consists were not already known and assented to? Especially, how came it to be anticipated as a fact, and by an axiomatic necessity, in the mind of Mr. Spencer, under the law of evolution itself? In other words, if certain ideas concerning the standard of duty and the absolutely perfect virtuous affections, and concerning the law of duty, are known by anticipation as the elements of that absolute morality which is the outcome of completed evolution, how could they have been perfected in the mind of Mr. Spencer, and how came he to be so confident in his belief and knowledge respecting their truth? It would seem as though, in attaining this assurance, he must have reached and gone beyond all the social and cerebral conditions of these very conceptions which could be allotted to the present generation. According to his own showing, the time has not yet come for even Mr. Spencer to know what absolute morality is. The very conception of its nature is hidden in the unrevealed future, much more the faith in it as a fact. According to the law of evolution, the absolute morality in both ideal and law is yet to be evolved. What it will be, and what it is to be, are problematic ideas and truths, concerning which no man can affirm with positiveness who derives his ethical conceptions from the processes of evolution, whether these processes are wrought in nerve, or mind, or in both. It follows, that any fixed conceptions of moral excellence or moral rules cannot be dependent on the shifting sympathies or associations of our fellow-men, even

though these are re-enforced by the activity of brain and nerve, and even though their progress be assumed to be definite and steady towards a goal of absolute moral perfection ; or, on the other hand, if there be such a goal, the conception of its nature and the belief in its truths cannot be the growth of the tendencies which it governs and controls, and out of which it is evolved. Neither the idea, nor the belief in it, can precede: both must come after the fact.

§ 46. III. Moral distinctions are not originated by the arbitrary *fiat* or *will of the Creator*. This theory has been held by not a few philosophers and theologians, either moved by the desire of exalting the prerogatives of the Supreme, or constrained by the seeming logical necessity of resolving every finite act and product into the power of the Creator.

III. Moral distinctions not originated by the fiat of the Creator.

William Occam, the distinguished nominalist, asserted, "Nullus est actus malus, nisi quatenus a Deo prohibitus est et qui non potest fieri bonus si a Deo præcipiatur et e converso. Ea est boni et mali natura, ut cum a liberrima Dei voluntate sancita sit ac definita ab eadem facile possit emoveri et refigi, adeo ut mutata ea voluntate, quod sanctum et justum est, possit evadere injustum." — Lib. ii. qu. 19.

William Occam.

Jeremy Taylor also: "God cannot do an unjust thing, because whatever he willeth or doeth is therefore just, because he willeth and doeth it, his will being the measure of justice."

Jeremy Taylor.

Dr. William Paley argues: "Since moral obligation depends, as we have seen, upon the will of God, right, which is correlative to it, must depend on the same. Right, therefore, signifies consistency with the will of God" (*Moral and Political Philosophy*, book ii. chap. ix.). Even Bishop Richard Cumberland, who contends most earnestly against Hobbes that morality is founded in the nature of things, and not in human legislation, was constrained by the imagined necessities of his logic to resolve "the nature of things" into the fiat of the Creator. He even went farther, — so far as to ascribe arithmetical and geometrical relations to an act of will in the first cause, similar to that by which rational beings come into existence. "I have proved the law of nature sufficiently immutable, when I have shown that it cannot be changed without contradiction, whilst the nature of things and their actual powers, which depend on the divine will, remain unchanged" (*Inquiry*, etc., chap. i.). Similarly Nathanael Culverwell (*Light of Nature*, chap. v.) says of moral law, "It is an eternal ordinance made in the depths of God's infinite wisdom and

William Paley.

Richard Cumberland.

counsel for the regulation and governing of the whole world, which yet had not its virtue in respect of God himself, who has always the full and unrestrained liberty of his own essence, which is so infinite as that it cannot bind itself, and which needs no law, all goodness and perfection being so intrinsical and essential to it," etc.

On the other hand, Richard Hooker affirms, "They err who think, that, of the will of God to do this or that, there is no reason besides his own will." "The being of God is a kind of law to his working; for that perfection which God is, giveth perfection to that he doeth. God is a law, both to himself and to other things besides" (*Eccles. Pol.*, book i. § 2). Stephen Charnock says, "The moral law is not properly a mere act of God's will, considered in itself, or a tyrannical edict, like those of whom it may be said, 'Stat pro ratione voluntas;' but it commands those things which are good in their own nature, and prohibits those things which are in their nature evil" (*Discourse on the Being and Attributes of God*, ii.).

That moral distinctions cannot, in any proper sense, be created by the will of God, is evident from the nature of these relations. They can belong only to voluntary action. They suppose that this action is conformed to a standard proposed for its direction. This standard is a reasonable standard; and, if so, it supposes some permanent relations fixed in the nature of the moral being, whether created or uncreated, which no fiat of mere will can be conceived as capable of changing as long as the being exists. This is evident still further from the consequences of the doctrine in question. Were it accepted, we could with no significance assert that God himself is good, or perfect, or holy; for, according to the theory, whatsoever God should do would of necessity be morally right. We could find no arguments in the design or effect of his works to prove that he is beneficent or just; for, by the very definition and analysis of our terms, every thing which he does, however malevolent or unjust it might seem to be, could not but be right. It would also be impossible to test any alleged communication or revelation from God as worthy or unworthy of him, because whatever he should declare or reveal must be worthy of himself.

It scarcely needs to be said, that, as soon as God is believed to be morally perfect, whatever he commands, or whatever he does, must for that reason be accepted as morally right: in other words, the will of God proves, but does not make, an act to be right. The command of the perfect Creator is indeed accepted as the criterion and measure of moral rectitude; but the mere command, as such, of a being who is all-powerful and all-knowing, can in no sense be the ground of moral obligation. Might of any kind does not and can not make right. But it may be urged, Is not God the originator of all things? Does not every thing which exists, including the relations of all things, proceed from his fiat? May it or must it not be true that among these relations the moral are included? We need not deny that all finite things, and their relations, derive their possible and their actual being from the self-existent Creator. Moral relations, however, are relations of action, i.e., of volition; and action supposes a fixed rule or norm to which they are or are not conformed. Such a rule must be found in reason, not in power, — in consistency or harmony of action with a real or supposed nature, or conclusion, or fact. If moral perfection is affirmed of God, it supposes relations that belong to his nature as having a permanent essence or character. It is true, indeed, that God is, and is what he is, as divine, by his own self-existent act. But to suppose this essence to be changeable by an act of will or power is to confound the mysterious energy by which God is self-existent as to his essential nature, with the creative act that calls an individual creature into life. It is to suppose activities that in their conceptions are totally dissimilar, and incapable of being compared. If the being and nature of God are supposed to be fixed, any voluntary conformity to this nature by man, or by God himself, must have a quality which cannot be changed by any fiat or arbitrary decree.

Commands of
God prove,
but do not
make, action
to be right
or wrong.

Moral relations, in this particular, may fitly be compared with

the mathematical. Of the mathematical we confidently say that they are fixed in the nature of things: they can neither be made nor unmade, they can neither be confirmed nor annulled, by the fiat of God. Whether space and time, which may be admitted in some sense to be their conditions, are possible products of creative power, is a legitimate question for metaphysical inquiry. It is safe to assert, however, that, while space and time exist, mathematical relations must be permanent and self-evidencing, and that over these the will of God has no control, but must respect them as permanent and controlling. Similarly we may affirm of moral relations, that, while man's nature and God's attributes remain, the will of God can neither originate nor destroy them. In this sense moral distinctions are immutable.

If, then, they do not originate in the caprice or power of man or God, they must be derived from and be enforced by the nature of man. It follows that they must be uniform and fixed, the nature of man being supposed to be uniform in its essential features.

**Objections
against the
independence
of moral
relations.**

§ 47. To this conclusion the following objections are urged. In principle, they have been anticipated and provided for. They ought, however, to be formally and explicitly considered. It is objected, —

(1) That moral distinctions cannot be permanent and uniform is proved by the variety of the speculative or philosophical theories which have been formed in respect to them. It is contended, that, if these relations were necessarily and invariably recognized by the human race, it is impossible to believe that they could be so variously defined and accounted for. Relations so obvious as these are represented to be, and so readily assented to, ought to be so clear as to admit satisfactory definitions and uniform explanations; and yet it is notorious that no conceptions have been the subjects of a greater number of conflicting theories than ethical conceptions. No theories have given rise to warmer or

**(1) Vanity of
speculative
theories.**

more pertinacious discussions, or more acrid controversies, than ethical theories.

In explanation and reply, we notice an obvious difference between the discernment of a relation in the concrete, or as exemplified in an individual example, and the same in the abstract; i.e., as denoted by generalized terms, or as defined by an exhaustive analysis. It may be very easy to discern a conception or a truth when applied or illustrated, and very difficult to give a scientific definition or theory of it. This holds good of every species of formulated definitions and scientific theories, even when the subject-matter is universally assented to, and placed beyond the reach of our questioning. The existence of the material world is accepted as a fact: its phenomena are appealed to as the most obvious examples of trustworthy events. But the definitions of matter are notoriously diverse and undecisive; and the theories of matter, and of man's belief in its reality, change with every generation. Heat and light are the most positive and energetic of physical agents; and yet no conceptions are so difficult to define as these, while the controversies concerning their real nature and their ultimate laws and relationships are more active at the present moment than ever.

Difference
between the
discernment
of a concrete
and an ab-
stract rela-
tion.

Mathematical concepts and relations are accepted as examples of the most obvious of self-evidencing entities, but the metaphysics of mathematics are proverbially attenuated and doubtful. Not unfrequently they are the occasion of open disagreement and sharp controversy. The same is true of some of the most familiar conceptions in social relations and intercourse, as those which pertain to property and exchange, to rights and legislation. The fundamental conceptions of political and social science are as much in discussion and controversy as are the conceptions and truths of Ethics. This, indeed, ought to be no matter of wonder, inasmuch as the most of them are founded in Ethics. It would almost seem to be true, that

the more familiar a conception, and the more obvious a truth, so much the more difficult is it to be defined and demonstrated; perhaps because the definitions of such conceptions necessarily imply the widest and thinnest of generalizations. Whatever may be the explanation, the fact is unquestioned.

On the other hand, the fact that men are never weary of seeking definitions for ethical conceptions, and of finding reasons for ethical beliefs, is decisive of the point that both concepts and theories concern realities which cannot be questioned. Men do not contend for ages over mere shadows: there is always some fire beneath the smoke of a never-ending controversy. We confidently infer that men would not seek so persistently to define or explain moral relations, were not these relations held by them to be important and real. The argument that men persist in forming new theories and new definitions in Ethics, proves the contrary of that which it is intended to establish; confirming, rather than weakening, the reality and importance of human duties and human rights.

(2) It is objected still further, that the controversies of men are as frequently practical as they are speculative. We might concede, it is urged, that, as themes for mere speculation, moral relations might be doubtful and vague; but surely they ought to be clear and unquestioned when required for practice, if these relations are either solid or sacred. But, in fact, men are as uncertain and as ill-agreed in respect to what they ought *to do*, as in respect to what they ought *to think*. Rules concerning ethical conduct are as diverse as are theories of ethical beliefs.

To this we reply, that these alleged disagreements as to what is right and wrong in action are both over- and under-stated. In respect to certain classes of duties, men are agreed in their convictions; while, in respect to others, it is not in the least surprising that they should be unsettled in opinion, or differ in their practical views.

Argument
from the
interest
manifested
in ethical
theories.

(2) Men find
practical
difficulties
as truly as
speculative.

In respect to the intentions or aims which should control those of their actions which affect themselves or their fellow-men, all men have the same fundamental convictions, whether or not they understand or assent to them when stated in abstract terminology or general propositions. So far as his fellow-men are concerned, every man knows that love is better than hate; that benevolence of purpose is right, and selfishness of aim is wrong. So far, also, as their intentions and impulses affect themselves, all men know that the inferior desires should be subjected to the higher, and that, when the two conflict, the higher should prevail.

Reply. Men are agreed in respect to what their purposes should be.

Even in respect to many classes of external actions, every man knows that in the ordinary conditions of social existence he should respect the life, the liberty, and the property of his fellow-men, and that excess and carelessness in respect to the appetites and impulses which affect himself (as gluttony, drunkenness, lust, idleness, and improvidence) are morally wrong. When we assert this, we are very far from saying that every man would give his formal assent to these truths, but that he could not withhold this assent if he would attend to their import. A man may fail to attend to these truths when expressed in words, or suggested in thought, and this through indolence or torpor of mind, or through unwillingness to think of what might occasion self-discontent or self-reproach; and yet, to every one who appreciates and attends to their import, such rules are self-evident. It is with these ethical axioms as it is with the axioms of mathematics: a man may fail to comprehend the conceptions involved; or, if in some sense he understands their meaning, he may fail to attend to them so carefully as to discern the relations of the concepts to one another, so as to know whether they are true or false; and yet, should he attend to them and appreciate them, he cannot withhold his assent. In respect to both classes of axioms, we say, for the same reason, the judgments of all men are alike.

Also in respect to many actions.

There are other ethical principles and rules in which men are very far from being agreed, and for two reasons :

Reasons for disagreement in respect to others. (a) The subject-matter is such that no uniform and fixed rules are possible. (b) What is right in one set of circumstances is wrong in another. Rules of this kind, it should be remembered, concern the external actions only, and never the controlling aim or purpose. It may be uniformly and invariably right that I should intend thus and thus, — as to produce this or that effect with respect to my fellow-men or myself, e.g., the highest welfare of either ; but it by no means follows that I ought to do or say the same things to the same man at all times, or to different men at the same time, and for the reason, that, as circumstances vary, the duty in external action will vary. If the subject-matter or the external action is not the same, the judgments of men in respect to acts of duty ought not to be the same, for the reason that the same material (i.e., the external act) which is right at one time may be wrong at another. It is also true, that, if the subject-matter is the same (i.e., if the external act is uniformly right, as in a few supposed cases), the obligation to perform the action can be discerned only by the man who is fully acquainted with the facts and relations which enforce the obligation. Different men may be differently informed or advised as to the facts ; and, according to the fulness or scantiness of their knowledge, they will judge more or less correctly. It follows, that the diversity of the practical judgments of men, concerning actions as contrasted with purposes, is no valid or decisive objection against the self-sufficing evidence or independent authority of moral relations. Such evidence and authority is not only consistent with, but it alone can adequately explain, the diversity of practical judgments and moral codes which are accepted among men ; and this, whether this diversity is more or less affected by physical or psychical causes ; whether it is ascribed to climate, food, or other material conditions, or to education, civilization, government, or religion.

CHAPTER VIII.

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF MORAL RELATIONS.

§ 48. IN the last chapter we reached the conclusion that the intellect does not derive moral relations from without the individual man, either in the form of information, or authority, or influence, but that it develops and learns them from within. We saw that the ideas of right and wrong cannot be the products of religion, society, or law, but are, so to speak, the creations of the individual man. While it is true that these external circumstances and influences have much to do in shaping, hastening, and enforcing these relations, they in no sense originate them.

**Conclusion of
preceding
chapter.**

Our next problem is to explain the processes by which they are originated within the man himself. If we are successful in this effort, we shall also be able to define the products. A delineation of the genesis or growth of these conceptions will involve an analysis and definition of their elements.

But here we are met with the theory, that the original and fundamental conceptions in morals, inasmuch as they are simple, have no proper growth or genesis, and are incapable of analysis or definition; that, though they originate within the human soul, they are among the so-called original relations or categories, which have the same relations to the activities of the will as the categories of thought hold to the judgments of the

**Theory very
common that
moral rela-
tions are
simple and
indefinable.**

intellect. Of these original conceptions, it is contended, we can state the psychological conditions indeed; but, being in their nature original and simple, they can neither be derived, nor analyzed, nor defined. All that we can say of them is, that, at a certain juncture of every man's history, these conceptions are necessarily discerned and assented to, and in connection with them are experienced the appropriate moral emotions or sentiments, as of obligation, merit, etc. By all who hold this theory, the relations themselves are ranked with the original intuitions which are fundamental to knowledge of every kind; as the relations of time, space, causation, and design, which stand on their own footing, and, being incapable of analysis, are original and fundamental to ethical and jural science in the same sense as the relations of space are fundamental to geometry, the relations of cause to physics, and of design to physiology and history. They teach us, furthermore, that the special categories of morals, when applied to the feelings and actions, are also attended with certain sentiments or emotions;—as of obligation, merit, and self-approbation, with their opposites,—each of which is peculiar in its nature, and incapable of being explained by, or of explaining, the relation which occasions it.

This general theory of the moral relations and sentiments has been held in various forms and with a great variety of phraseology by different philosophers, in different ages, but with the common features already enumerated. The counter or antagonistic theories are also very diverse in points of detail; but they hold in common, that the moral relations are complex in their nature, and capable of being defined by an analysis of their elements; that they are genetic in their growth, and therefore admit of analysis, and are capable of a history. Their advocates also hold that the sentiments which they elicit are sentiments altogether unique and peculiar, while yet they are the constant attendants of these conceptions, and in a certain sense are explained by them.

It will be observed that all these theories, however antagonistic they are in other particulars, have this in common, — that they find the origin of ethical conceptions and feelings within the individual man, and wholly reject the doctrine that makes them the products of external influences and teachings.

§ 49. The several theories which teach that the fundamental ethical concepts and sentiments are original, and incapable of analysis or definition, may be grouped into three classes, as follows : —

(1) The theory which ascribes them, in the last resort, to a special faculty of sensibility called the moral sense.

This power is conceived with more or less definiteness as originally a capacity for peculiar feelings or sentiments called the moral sentiments ; such as the feelings of the beauty and deformity of virtuous and vicious acts, of self-approval or disapproval, of obligation and good or ill desert. These emotions are supposed to be uniformly experienced or evoked with and by certain actions or volitions. The capacity for these feelings is held to be an original endowment, and the feelings themselves to be ultimate, i.e., incapable of analysis. These feelings are the original sentiments in the moral life, and the capacity for them is the germinant principle of all our moral ideas. We simply find ourselves experiencing and using them, and that is all that we can say. The intellect discerns the conduct which occasions these subjective experiences or emotions, and connects the two in original moral judgments. The conduct or character which pleases the moral sense, it pronounces morally good or morally right : that which displeases it is distinguished as morally wrong. By this theory the sensibility is the originator of the ethical experiences. The several sensibilities, being themselves ultimate and inexplicable, are as incapable of definition as are the several bodily sensations. The intellectual conceptions are referred to and defined by the sentiments, just as the sensible qualities of matter are defined by the sensations which they occasion. The theory itself, in

Held in various forms.

(1) The theory of the moral sense.

some of its elements, is suggested, if not taught, by Plato, and is often referred to the Platonic school. Its most distinguished expounders are Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume, Herbert, and many others.

§ 50. (2) The second of these theories finds the original of our moral relations in the pure intellect, or the reason; i.e., in certain ethical categories, which, as we have already said, take rank with those that are fundamental to the intellect, beginning with an intellectual element or germ, as the preceding theories begin with an emotional. They all hold in common, that the intellectual element is primary and fundamental, the emotional following this by a certain but unexplained connection. "It is absurd," says Dugald Stewart, "to ask why we are bound to practise virtue. The very notion of virtue implies the notion of obligation." What is true of the sentiment of obligation is true of the other feelings, as of self-approbation or disapprobation, of merit and demerit. The relation is self-evident to the intellectual judgment or assent, and the sentiments or feelings attend them by an equally necessary but unexplained coherence. The advocates of this theory are numerous and conspicuous. We name Ralph Cudworth, Richard Price, Thomas Reid, Dugald Stewart, Sir William Hamilton, President James McCosh, Professor Henry Calderwood, and Dr. Laurens P. Hickok.

§ 51. (3) The third theory, if it be proper to recognize it as a third, and not as in principle the same with the first, is represented by Kant and his ethical followers. This theory finds a faculty called the practical reason, which presents to the will an authoritative judgment technically called the *categorical imperative*. To this the will responds by reverence which impels to action. This theory, as it would seem, is a combination of the two preceding, except that Kant earnestly denies that reverence before the law is a sentiment; contending that it is an authoritative impulse or commanding force which emerges into human experi-

(2) The theory of the moral reason.

(3) The theory of the practical reason, or categorical imperative.

ence on appropriate occasions, as the practical reason categorically commands and forbids certain acts of the will. It does not say, feel or do so or so if you would be happy, or fulfil the end of your being, or realize the dignity of man, but do so or so: and that is all that is to be said; you have the command, obey it (*Sic volo, sic jubeo*).

Another more striking peculiarity of the Kantian theory is, that it seeks to exclude the element of sensibility altogether from the domain of ethics; holding that a virtuous action, if impelled or motivated at all by any consideration of happiness, even the satisfaction found in right action, is thereby corrupted at the root, and ceases altogether to be morally good. These and other features distinguish this theory from the other two. In common with both, it teaches that the conceptions and emotions are simple and original, and have no relation of dependence or connection with one another. This theory is held by Kant and his followers. Of well-known writers, the most conspicuous among his English disciples is F. P. Cobbe, the author of "Intuitive Morals" (London, 1855; Boston, 1859). With this theory the adherents of Price, etc., have an intimate intellectual affiliation.

The advocates of these three theories have this in common, that they incline to conceive, and many of them formally hold, that the source of these original relations and feelings, one or both, is in some sort an independent faculty, which has no necessary connection with the normal endowments and experiences of human nature, whether intellectual or emotional, but might be attached to or detached from the human soul, with little, if any, serious disturbance to the other endowments, except so far as to limit or enlarge their range of action.

§ 52. IV. In opposition to all these three classes of theories, we hold that moral relations and feelings require no special faculty or endowment, whether it be called the moral reason, or moral sense, or practical reason; but that they are the necessary products or

IV. The theory that they are the product of a special application of self-consciousness and will.

results of two conspicuous human endowments, — the reflective intellect, and the voluntary impulses or affections. The reflective intellect cannot but find the norm or standard of duty in the natural capacities of man. So soon as it conceives of any ideal whatever for aspiration or control — so soon as it recognizes such an ideal, it necessarily imposes it as a law for the voluntary activities. This ideal, thus recognized and imposed, becomes a moral law: in other words, so soon as the intellect reflects upon the several sensibilities which are subject to the control of the will, as compared with one another, it must find a standard of ideal desirableness or worth for its springs of action. So soon as it proposes to itself the question, How are they to be applied or controlled by the will? the reflecting man imposes this ideal upon the choosing man as a law of voluntary action; i.e., of conduct and character. So far, also, as the reflecting or self-conscious man finds in the relative excellence of these springs of action, or in their effects, an indication of the ends or purposes to which man's capacities for action are adapted, so far does he find in this constitution of his being an additional force of law, compelling his rational approval, and requiring his voluntary consent.

According to this theory, the moral relations, so far as they are rational or intellectual, are not original categories, but are the necessary result of a special application of the category of adaptation or design. It also follows that the sentiments of self-approbation, obligation, and merit, are also special applications of the commonly recognized human sensibilities, as affected by man's free and personal activity when reviewed by man's conscious or reflective judgment. It follows, that the moral nature or the moral faculty are but other names for the human faculties when employed upon a special subject-matter, and in a peculiar manner. The products of this special but natural mode of activity are moral ideas and moral emotions. It is held, further, that these products, so far as they are generalized concepts, can be explained by their genesis, can be

analyzed into their constituents, and defined by them. Moreover, they can be recognized as holding important relations with the other laws and forces of the universe, and so take their place in the general theory of matter and spirit.

Upon this theory, also, the moral sentiments can be fully justified as being not only the most powerful, but the most rational, emotions which man experiences, and thus vindicate their acknowledged right to be supreme in their authority over man and in the counsels and laws of the supreme Reason.

The only method of settling the question between these theories is to appeal to consciousness. In order to do this successfully, we must understand the import of the theories in conflict, and then proceed to inquire which corresponds to human consciousness and experience; which, also, is confirmed by the language and conduct of man; and, again, which is also logically self-consistent in what it asserts and implies; and, finally, which adjusts itself to a rational theory of the universe.

The theories tested by consciousness.

Pursuing this method, —

§ 53. (1) We find, first of all, that moral qualities and relations are affirmed of the voluntary actions of spiritual beings, and of these only. (a) They pertain to *spiritual beings*. Moral distinctions or ethical conceptions are not vague entities or mysterious *abstracta*, floating in the empyrean of a hazy or soaring imagination, nor are they concrete entities or phenomena; but they pertain exclusively to voluntary agents. Rightness, virtue, goodness, and their opposites, — wrongness, vice, badness, — are indeed *abstracta*; but the realities for which they stand are attributes or relations which belong to those agents which are fitted by nature to hold them. (b) They are affirmed of the inner or *spiritual activities* of these beings. Bodily activities alone are neither right nor wrong. An articulation of the tongue, a movement or stroke of the arm, an adjustment of the features, apart from what either signifies or

(1) Moral qualities affirmed only of spiritual beings and their voluntary acts.

effects, is neither right nor wrong. Even if their effects are good or evil, — as in the accidental destruction of property or life, or the unintended hurt to the feelings by an ill-timed word, — such effects or acts are not and can not be wrong. (c) They are also limited to the *voluntary affections*. Acts of pure cognition are of and by themselves neither right nor wrong. The intellect is such in its nature that its perceptions and beliefs must follow certain conditions as their necessary effects. If it is applied with attention to a certain object-matter, it must perceive and judge and believe so and so. We call its knowledge right or wrong in the sense of being true or false; but, so far as it is an act or result of pure intellect, we do not call it *morally* right or wrong.

Acts of *emotion* as such, i.e., considered apart from the will, have no moral quality. We now and then call such emotions right and wrong, but in the sense of befitting; i.e., appropriate to the object or occasion, but never morally right or wrong. It is only as the feelings are controlled or modified by the will that they admit any moral quality. We are shut up to the conclusion that right and wrong can be affirmed of the acts or states of the will, and of these only.

As Butler expresses the matter, “The object of this faculty of moral discernment is *actions*, comprehending under that name *active or practical principles*, — those principles from which men would act if occasions and circumstances gave them power, and which, when fixed and habitual in any person, we call his character. It does not appear that brutes have the least reflex sense of actions as distinguished from events, or that will and design, which constitute the very nature of actions as such, are at all an object to their perception. But to ours they are; and they are the *object, and the only one*, of the approving and disapproving faculty.” — *Dissertation*, II.

Moral quality belongs only to the volitions, whether permanent or transient, — to the volitions, be it observed, not to their objects or conditions of choice, but solely to the acts or states

themselves. We say, indeed, and not incorrectly, that a man chooses or rejects the right or the wrong, as science or wealth, or private or public good; but we intend by the words, objects that are fit to be chosen, i.e., objects which, if chosen, involve a right or wrong choice. In other words, moral qualities and relations are *limited to the person and his personal volitions, and cannot be affirmed of his motives or reasons.*

(2) That the volitions may be judged to be morally right or wrong, they must be measured or tried by some *standard*. The standard by which they are tried is the natural capacities of the agent. “Our perception of vice and ill-desert arises from a comparison of actions with the nature and capacities of the agent” (BUTLER, *Diss.*, II.). Every man, so far as he reflects upon his several desires and impulses, knows his nature and capacities, knows their comparative excellence, in the natural good¹ which their exercise involves. So far as he compares love with hatred, self-sacrifice with self-service, appetite with the higher emotions, he knows their worth, even before they are controlled by the will. And he cannot but imagine what he might be and enjoy were he to make this naturally better morally supreme. He cannot turn his eye inwards without to some extent forming an ideal standard derived from the range of his actual and possible sensibilities by which to test

(2) Of such acts and states when tried by man's natural capacities.

¹ “*In the natural good*,” let it be observed, which the exercise of any affection involves. Otherwise we should suppose the child to have first known the blessedness of moral perfection in order to feel its authority as duty. But the child has had experience of the exercise of many of the kindly and loving experiences (as pity, kindness, magnanimity, etc.) which are so familiar in infant life. Out of any of these, it requires little reflection for either man or child to form an ideal conception of the blessedness and worth which lie dormant within, and wait only to be awakened by the life-giving will. It is in a twofold and eminent sense that we call the law of duty an ideal law. It is ideal not only when it is contrasted with the imperfection of actual achievement, but in the very elements of its own existence (cf. §§ 62, 65).

and judge his volitions. So soon as he compares these emotions, he judges the one to be better, naturally better, than the other, *even before he has allowed or repressed either by his will*. So far as he compares and reflects upon what he is capable of in the better of these impulses, he must form a standard of ideal good. This standard he must in some sense desire to make real by conforming to it his will. If he desires good of any sort by an instinctive impulse, he must be impelled towards that good which is the highest and best. So far as he exercises reason or forecast, there must spring up before him the vision of ideal good, whether it is or is not turned into fact. So soon as he looks forward into the future, and sees that there is an opportunity for the realization of this ideal, he cannot but propose this ideal to himself as a rule for his future volitions. He cannot do otherwise as a rational being. Thus, by combining freedom with self-consciousness, man becomes a law to himself by the necessities of his own being. The reflecting man must necessarily become the law-giver to the choosing man.¹

To the same effect, says Bishop Butler, "there is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart as well as his external actions; which passes judgment upon himself thereon; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, and good, others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust; which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him the doer of these accordingly," etc. — *Sermons on Human Nature*, ii.

§ 54. (3) He also finds the end or design for which he exists in the constitution and capacities of his being which we have noticed. So soon as the question is suggested to his thoughts,

¹ Kant thus characterizes a person:—

"From which it follows that a person is subject to no other laws than those which he imposes on himself." — *Anfangs-Gründe der Rechts Lehre*.

“For what do I exist, and how can I fulfil the end of my being?” he cannot but answer, “In choosing the highest object, or obeying the best impulses, which my nature provides for or makes possible.” As a rational being, he compares and classifies the phenomena of his inner life. He refers them to their originator in the self that produces them. He interprets the working of these forces by referring to the conditions or laws under which they act. When he asks, *What are they for?* for what end do they exist? or for what are they created and intended? he finds the answer by referring to the highest use which is within his knowledge and his control. His first answer would be the predominance of the best impulses, because they are known to be naturally best. So much the more, if this product is within his own power, and entirely beyond the interference of any other agent, — so much the more distinctly, — must such an exercise of his best activities be owned as the end for which he exists (cf. TRENDLENBURG, *Der Widerstreit zwischen Kant und Aristoteles in der Ethik*; *Historische Beiträge*, etc., dritter Band, pp. 201, 202). But the end for which the activities of our being are fitted, so soon as it is discerned, is at once accepted as also a *law* for their action, whether this law is obeyed by a natural necessity, as in the harmonious activities of vegetable or animal life, or can be self-discerned and self-imposed by the intelligent and reflective man. A force of any sort, whether natural or spiritual, asserts its energy, and so bespeaks its law-giving power in the effects which it brings to pass: hence we so often interpret the forces which constitute our being as the laws which control it. More readily do we interpret the ends for which these forces conspire as internal laws which we cannot evade. A combination of forces tending towards any end, whether within or without, is invested with augmented energy. But, when such forces and tendencies are self-discerned by the intelligent spirit, they are at once recognized as more than unconscious agencies: they enforce themselves at once as rea-

(3) By these natural capacities as indicating the end for which he exists.

sonable law. Indeed, it is not till the purpose or end of any existing thing is ascertained, that its nature is fully understood. So soon as this purpose is discerned as supreme, it is at once accepted as the rightful or reasonable law of its acting, whether this acting is necessary or free. Pre-eminently is this true of a free and reflecting being who knows the end of his living self by a direct and conscious insight into the nature and degree of the good which he can propose to himself as the law of his active energy. The authority of such a law is resistless, springing out of his very nature, and discerned by his reason, beyond which there is no appeal. This, be it remarked, is reached so far as the individual is related to himself. The other applications of the category of design present themselves with widening and heightened authority, as man's relations to his fellows, to the physical universe, and to God, are discovered, and the ends for which he exists are seen to include other beings in the rational harmony and order, and the consequent well-being, of the universe.

§ 55. (4) The processes analyzed give the essential elements of the conception of moral good, and enable us to define it as follows: *moral good is the voluntary choice of the highest natural good possible to man, as known to himself and by himself, and interpreted as the end of his existence and activities.* The activity must be voluntary if it involves responsibility. Its relations to the several capacities of man's being must be known by himself, and accepted as the end of his existence, and imposed as the law of his activity. Otherwise it cannot be discovered and enforced independently of external aid and authority. External relations and influences assist to the discovery of those relations, but they cannot originate them. All that they can do, when they are most efficient, is to direct and excite the mind to an earlier and easier reflection. They can simply inform the man what he will find if he looks, and furnish the language in which he can clothe his own discoveries.

(4) These processes of reflection give the elements of moral good and evil.

(5) The processes described can be performed at a very early age. As has already been said, whatever view is taken of the moral relations, or the steps or acts by which they are gained, it is invariably allowed that the mind must reflect upon its voluntary acts in order to judge of them as right or wrong, and even to understand these words; and this whether the rule is given by an intuition, an instinct, the categorical imperative, or the moral sense. Whatever view is taken of the nature of the standard, all agree that the child must regard its own activities with discriminating self-inspection in order to compare and judge them by a moral rule. But, if the child is capable of this self-inspection, in order to apply the rule, it may use the same self-inspection, that it may discover the rule in its own natural capacities for higher and lower good.

(5) These processes can be performed at an early age.

That the child is capable of the processes which we have supposed, is evident still further from the methods employed by parents and teachers to awaken children to the apprehension of the import of moral distinctions. That this knowledge cannot be imparted by instruction or authority has already been argued (§§ 41-46). One might as reasonably contend that the elementary conceptions of pure geometry can be imparted, by mere testimony, as the elementary conceptions of ethics.

That parents and teachers can and do rouse the minds of children to the apprehension of moral relations will not be disputed. By what method? Invariably by a method which leads to intelligent self-inspection; technically speaking, to a process of an observing self-consciousness of the powers and capacities of their inner being. When the mother would awaken or stimulate the moral consciousness of the child, she invariably asks, Was there not a better activity of your nature which you could have called into exercise? Would not self-sacrificing or self-imparting love have been better than self-appropriating desire, when these two came in conflict? Is not appetite denied, i.e., displaced by a higher impulse, better than appetite slavishly or selfishly obeyed? As the child responds when convinced, or assents even more eloquently by silence, it shows that it has followed the challenging inquiry by turning its eye inward to compare for itself the higher with the inferior

Experiences of childhood.

good ; or, as it lifts its eye again to meet the searching eye of parent or monitor, it shows by its altered expression what it has found within. Indeed, we may almost say that the dawning and progressive activity of ethical self-consciousness may be discerned in the new expression which the eye of infancy assumes when it makes its first experiences of responsible self-activity and judgment. The eye of many animals is penetrating and active : the eye of others is singularly human and affectionate. In man alone does it manifest the self-judging and introverted expression which is too often also self-condemning or self-excusing.

§ 56. This process of self-judgment may *begin with the child's rudimentary life, and be matured and trained with the development of its powers.* So soon as the infant can distinguish between the natural desirableness of two emotions, or springs of action, he can distinguish them, when brought in conflict, as morally good or evil. The conflicting and contrasted impulses may be the simplest conceivable, — only two contending impulses to self-sacrifice or self-indulgence, to love or hate, such as early and often contend within the breast of the child. If the child reflects at all, he cannot but know that the one is or would be the better use of his powers than the rival.

Are continued after development into manhood.

“ Early he perceives
Within himself a measure and a rule,
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,
That shines for him, and shines for all mankind.”

The Excursion, book iv.

The ideally good is no sooner known — usually, i.e., the possibly better, — than it is applied as a measure of the actual attainments. As the child's conceptions of the possibilities of his nature enlarge, just so rapidly does the standard of moral goodness rise. Man can sooner part with his shadow when he stands in the open sunlight, than he can shake off or lose sight of that ideal of duty which he finds in his own capacities of good when viewed in the light of his reflective judgment.

The law proposed by self-reflecting reason is indeed *an ideal*

law. It presents what is possible, not what is actually achieved. The inner law-giver imagines what he might be, before he affirms what he is. But this presents no difficulty. On any view of the origin and nature of the moral relations, they must be regarded as ideal, and not as necessarily actual (§ 2): indeed, herein is their glory, and their power to elevate and transform. No man would confess that the standard by which he judges the actual in himself or his fellow-men is transcribed from the actual realizations of either. This were to lower ideal and moral law to man's defective achievements. But, though the law is ideal, it is founded on solid fact; it is derived from the capacities of our being, the end and use for which we exist and hold our place in the economy of the universe, and the purposes of the living God. It is one thing to have an ideal which has no known and necessary relations to the actual, and to find it and be forced to use it, we know not why, by instinct or impulse, and the like; and altogether another to find its basis in the actual capacities which are provided in man's nature. In the latter case alone do we find the ideal in the really possible, and for this reason is such an ideal wholly rational. We also find it in the end or design for which we exist, and therefore we use it as the measure of our beings' perfection.

§ 57. Thus far have we confined our attention almost exclusively to man's relations to himself; i.e., to the workings of his nature, were we to suppose that he existed alone. Such a view limits very narrowly the range of man's duties, as, indeed, of his experiences and knowledge of every kind. In order to expand this range, he must know that his fellows are moral beings like himself, under the same moral law, and designed for the same perfection. How does he know this? We answer, The same indications which show his fellows to be human prove them to be moral also. If my fellow-men are like me in being men, they are like me in being subject to the same rule of voluntary

The standard,
or law, is
ideal.

Provides for
man's rela-
tions to his
fellows.

action, in proposing to themselves the same ends, and judging of themselves by the same standards. They exist for the same ends with myself, — the voluntary realization of the same perfection. They together constitute a social whole in the adaptations of their nature to a moral organism, under the economy of reason and of God. If this is so, the well-being of each is not only compatible with, but is conducive to, the well-being of all the others. If the voluntary recognition of the good of my fellow-man is the noblest use of my own nature, then the reciprocal return of benevolence from him to me blesses him as well as myself. If I believe in an orderly or rationally constituted system or society of beings like myself, as I must in order to have any reasoned or scientific knowledge of them at all, I must believe that the best good of each is conducive to and compatible with the best good of all together, and that, whenever I sacrifice for the whole, I must achieve my highest good, not only in the inward experiences of benevolence, but in the external or corporeal acts to which these impel, and to their results in the economy of the universe. To desire my own well-being is necessary and right, because I thereby secure the end for which I exist. To sacrifice my private and separate good when it is in conflict with the good of others is also right, because my highest good in an orderly universe of moral beings can never conflict with the well-being of the commonwealth; and this is a still higher good and nobler end.

If the relations of man to nature, as well as to his fellows, may be interpreted in their possibilities and their ends, we reasonably assume that moral ends are supreme over both nature and man. If we raise our thoughts still higher, and recognize each individual, as also society and nature, as the work of a personal creator, for the manifestation and fulfilment of definite and consistent purposes in a coherent and rational universe, we shall accept the conclusion that moral ends are not only supreme, but that they express the will and law of God.

Supremacy of
moral law
provided for.

§ 58. We gather and recapitulate the results of our analysis as follows : moral relations are discerned by finding and applying the rule or measure of voluntary action, Recapitulation. which is furnished by the nature of man when this activity is judged as related to the end of his existence. That voluntary activity which proposes this supreme end is morally right : that which falls short of it is morally wrong. The object of choice to the will is not itself morally right or wrong. The motive cannot be itself a choice. The best natural impulse or desire which the occasion calls for or admits must be made supreme ; that is, the object which involves such a desire must be chosen. A morally good choice is a choice that selects or prefers the best end possible to the nature of man ; in other words, the best natural good. *Bonum mentis naturale quum est voluntarium, fit bonum morale.* That our purposes should possibly fail of these ends is an incident of that exercise of the voluntary power which is necessary to moral responsibility. That man should be able to find the norm of his activity in himself follows from his being self-conscious and rational. As self-conscious, he understands the relative excellence of the impulses which his nature provides for, and the supreme end to which his nature points. As rational, and capable of self-direction, he must propose to himself the best as the norm or aim of his impulses, whenever these are made voluntary, and must invariably impose this on his will as its law. When any choice is made, as self-conscious he must try and test the quality of this activity by the rule or test which he finds in his own capacities ; and, as the result of the comparison, he must discern the act as morally right or morally wrong. After having thus evolved these conceptions, he uses them to try all subsequent choices and acts. He need not stay to analyze the newly discovered conception. He may not even know that it can be analyzed. He simply asks, How can the concept be correctly applied as a rule or measure of conduct ? Moreover, his first finished and distinct experience of right or wrong activity is attended by

the conviction that moral good is superior to all other good, and moral evil surpasses all other evil, and both are of supreme importance as the highest and most consummate forms of human activity.

§ 59. We have followed thus far the method of analysis, in order that we might discover the several elements, both psychological and metaphysical, which are respectively present as the conditions or constituents of the so-called ethical processes and products. We need only reverse the order, to discover how both processes and products are built up from the elements of both descriptions. It will be conceded that these processes are performed, and their products are evolved, by moral beings only; and that moral beings are necessarily endowed with intelligence, sensibility, and will. They are also limited to psychical states, being applied to bodily acts only whenever and so far as these express spiritual feelings and purposes. These elements and conditions of the ethical states and acts are essential to the import of ethical concepts; so far, at least, that these must be defined as acts or states of rational, emotional, and voluntary beings.

All this being granted by the advocates of all the theories with which we are at present concerned, the question which would seem to present itself to such persons would be simply this: given this complex psychological substratum for all the so-called ethical qualities of human actions which are thus complexly analyzed and defined, is it as simple concepts, or as the products of these psychological endowments, that they manifest the end for which man exists? And is it as simple, or complex, that they find a place for the voluntary realization or failure of this end, when recognized, and thus provide for those emotions which are confessedly present in all ethical experiences? It is conceded by all, that the relation of purpose or final cause is essential to any satisfactory ethical theory. It remains to show in what way this end, when apprehended by self-consciousness, necessarily becomes invested with the authority of law to the will, and also the ground of self-approbation, obligation, and merit. If this analysis is correct, it is obvious that ethical relations are in some sense conditioned upon a complex of psychological endowments. If this is so, these elements must enter into our definition of these relations, and we accept the analysis as the solution of this much-vexed question.

The fact cannot escape the thoughtful reader, that end, and adaptation, and design, and even God, are assumed as categories of thought in our explanation of the nature of moral relations as originally developed and reflectively formulated in and to the human mind. The same is equally obvious in the explanation given of the corresponding emotions, particularly that of obligation (cf. §§ 62-65). This should occasion no surprise to one who

Recapitulation and synthesis.

Relation to metaphysical and theological theory.

reflects that no school of psychologists can dispense with some sort of a *a priori* metaphysics, not even the positivists. Even they can neither connect, nor interpret, nor practically apply, their so-called positive phenomena, except by the aid of the categories of succession and similarity. The evolutionists draw more heavily than any school upon an assumed

“far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”

The force which thus moves and is moved is not by their own concessions “unknowable,” at least so far as its self-developing power is concerned.

Should it be said, if this is granted or assumed, then ethics must in the last analysis be resolved into theology, and the interpretation and discovery of the moral law must involve the distinct recognition of God as giving it reality and authority, we reply, This is no more true in ethics than it is in physics. It does not follow, however, that the moral categories must be analyzed and applied with a distinct apprehension of their completed import in order to their control over the intellect and feelings. If a man goes so far as to know that his inmost nature, by its inmost forces, works for righteousness, individually or socially, he can understand the reality and authority of the moral law which his own nature reveals, whether or not he recognizes “a power not himself,” behind it. It does not follow, that because the recognition of design, or of a purpose involving authority or law, involves faith in the living God, when all its implications are “evolved,” that therefore ethics must necessarily imply the distinct and constant recognition of a theology. And yet it may be true that a reflective analysis of our faith in the moral order of the universe may show that it logically implies faith in God, as truly as our faith in its natural order implies faith in a divine Architect. One of the most hopeful signs of modern ethical speculation is this,—that, as we are challenged step by step to give account of our faith in duty, we are forced to recognize more and more distinctly the absolute necessity of a spiritual rather than a materialistic metaphysics of the universe of matter and spirit, and a theistic rather than an agnostic philosophy. The distinct recognition of this truth gives great value and interest to such a treatise as Professor T. H. Green’s “*Prolegomena of Ethics*”¹ (Oxford, 1884).

¹ Cf. *The Grammar of Assent*, by J. P. NEWMAN, 4th ed., pp. 108-110; *Essays on the Philosophy of Theism*, by WILLIAM GEORGE WARD, London, 1884, vol. ii. pp. 95 sqq.; *Christianity and Morality*, by HENRY WACE, M.A., lect. iii. (first course); *Righteousness a Personal Relation*, London, 1877; *The Relation between Ethics and Religion*, by JAMES MARTINEAU, London, 1883.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MORAL FEELINGS.

§ 60. *THE moral feelings or sentiments* need to be accounted for by any theory which asks to be received. It is not enough that the universally recognized ethical *conceptions* should be explained. The *sentiments* or emotions which are distinctively ethical must also be accounted for. Those theories which find these relations to be original categories in the soul, also find the ethical emotions to be original and peculiar experiences. The connection of the moral emotions with the moral judgments they do not attempt to explain. Indeed, by the very terms of every one of these theories its advocates are relieved from the obligation to connect judgment with emotion, or emotion with judgment. Each accepts, as already furnished, three classes of original elements or data: viz., certain relations discerned, or concepts apprehended by the intellect; certain emotions felt or experienced by the sensibility; and the constant and necessary conjunction of the two. On the other hand, the explication, if successful, of the one by the other, or the combination of the two as natural and necessary, so far forth strengthens the theory which assumes the responsibility of explaining some connection between the two. We proceed to show how the discernment or development of moral relations by the processes described in the last chapter, necessarily involves and accounts for those sentiments and emotions which are universally recognized as moral.

Place of the
emotions in
an ethical
theory.

§ 61. (1) Prominent among these emotions are the feelings of *self-approval* and *self-reproach*. It is obvious, that, if man is naturally pleased with any form of natural good, he must necessarily approve or be pleased with its originator. If he is offended and repelled by an evil effect to himself, he must be offended by its cause. If this cause or originator is a person, i.e., an intelligent and voluntary producer of this good or evil, he must pre-eminently love or be displeased with that person. The feeling, whether of love or hate, toward a personal cause of good or evil to one's self, is different in quality and intensity from any feelings towards an impersonal thing, whether it be animate or inanimate. The feelings of persons towards persons in any relation, almost refuse to be classed with the feelings of persons towards impersonal agents. Man, as a voluntary being, is capable of originating good or evil to himself. As such, he can be and he is the sole cause of whatever good or evil comes from the impulses and affections which he makes supreme. As the originator of such good or evil by himself to himself, his feelings rise to a higher tone. He must approve and love himself, or disapprove and hate himself, with a quality and intensity that are peculiar.¹ Both these affections of self-favor or disfavor to himself must in their nature and experience be unique, both as they are personal affections, and as the person is at once the giver and receiver of the love or hatred. The fact that man, by his double nature, at once gives and receives, administers and suffers, causes these correlated emotions to be the most desired and dreaded of human experiences, the strongest motives of human action, — the most blessed of joys, or the most bitter of inward pains. These joys and pains deepen and

¹ ὥς γὰρ οἱ βιγούντες καὶ πυρετοῖς δακνόμενοι τῶν παντῶ πασχόντων ἔξωθεν ὑπὸ καύματος ἢ κρύους μᾶλλον ενοχλοῦνται καὶ κακίον ἔχουσιν· οὕτως ἐλαφροτέρας ἔχει τὰ τυχερὰ τὰς λύπας ὥσπερ ἔξωθεν ἐπιφερομένης· τὸ δὲ “οὔτις ἐμοὶ τῶν ἄλλος ἐπαίτιος ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς” ἐπιθρηνοῦμενον τοῖς ἁμαρτηνομένοις ἐνδόθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ βαρύτερον ποιεῖ τῷ αἴσχωρ τοῦ ἀλγεινόν. — PLUTARCH *de Tran.*

grow more intense as the emotions and preferences which occasion them become more positive and clear in view of the manifold relations which they hold to the individual himself, and the persons with whom he is connected.

The self-produced good and evil in this case, be it observed, are not gain and loss in the form of adventitious good, or good received from without; but they are the good or evil which are involved in the very exercise of the affections or desires. The good springs up from within. It is not a good of condition, passively received from without, or added by way of reward, but good of emotion within, which finds the joy of a self-bestowed and self-received reward or punishment in the very exercise of the best impulses or affections. So far, we have to do with self-approbation and self-reproach.

§ 62. (2) The feeling of *obligation* comes next in order. This is often styled the judgment of obligation, and so often that some acute philosophers seem almost to question whether the word even suggests an emotion. The question is fair and reasonable, With which does the experience begin, — with an emotion, or a judgment? This uncertainty may be accounted for by the fact that the feeling is usually referred to some act of duty, — often to an external act, which is recognized as one which ought to be done, — the relation in such cases being transferred from the doer to his deed. Another reason is found in the fact, as we shall soon explain, that the elementary feeling of obligation is very often re-enforced by the authority of other persons, although it originates in the authority of ourselves as law-givers or judges over against ourselves.

The sense of obligation which we seek to explain is that which occurs in its most elementary form, — the form which is experienced by the soul within itself, without reference to any command from without. We explain it thus: we notice first, that, as the feelings of self-approval and self-reproach follow the right or

(2) *Obligation. Feeling and judgment.*

The elementary feeling considered first.

wrong voluntary activity, so the feeling of obligation to choose or reject, to do or avoid, *precedes* such activity. As self-approval and self-reproach are at once the most exquisite of pleasures or pains, whenever and as soon as the activity as yet not decided is proposed to the voluntary by the reflecting self for its election, it is *enforced by the self-approval or self-reproach which is known will certainly follow*. As these emotions are the most valued and the most dreaded, they constitute the strongest motives by which a man can be bound or held to right activity; and, as they are the most disinterested of feelings, they are altogether incapable of any selfish taint. The sense or sentiment of obligation, it should be noticed, is limited to a choice or action not yet achieved, when thought of as ideal and future. The sense of obligation, in the proper use of the term, always imports a future activity, — an activity as yet not chosen or executed. It is only in a secondary way that we say of the actual past, “I ought to have done it,” or, “I did what I ought.”

The sense or sentiment of obligation, as men ordinarily experience and interpret it, is the feeling which is occasioned by the apprehended favor or disfavor of our fellow-men, usually occupying the place of natural superiors or rulers. With this feeling may be more or less obscurely blended and symbolized our own self-approval or self-reproach. But not a few theorists who undertake to analyze the sentiment resolve the whole of it into the hope or fear of the complacency or displeasure of another person, and construct their entire ethical theory upon this basis.

Is felt to-
wards a per-
son.

We have already emphasized the point that the sentiment which we desire to detect and define is the feeling which has its source and root within the individual soul. It is worth noticing, that, in each of the cases supposed, we have to do with some person who is *the obliger*. In the *first case* the person with whom we are confronted is our Creator, or one or many of our fellow-men promising their favor, or threatening its loss:

thus *binding* and holding us to do or avoid the act of duty or of sin. In *the second case* we are also confronted with a person; myself, as a lawgiver, promising self-approval, or threatening its opposite, — the brightest of all conceivable rewards, and the bitterest of pains.

Should it be suggested, that, according to this analysis, the man must first have experienced self-approbation and self-reproach before he can feel their force as *obliging or binding motives*, it might be replied, that this can only apply to the first activities of ethical life, but not to any experience of obligation that falls within the limits of remembered experience. It is of little moment, if, in our first experiences, self-approval and self-reproach should be these rudimentary moral emotions, which might precede the matured feelings of sanctioned command. The experiences of which we are conscious are those which follow at a later date, after consciousness and reflection are fully developed. So soon as man is fully awake to a complete and distinct consciousness of moral good or evil, self-approval and self-reproach must ever afterwards be regarded as the brightest of his rewards, and the darkest and most dreaded of his fears.

That the feeling of obligation thus arising should be unique should not surprise us. First of all, it is worthy of
The feeling is unique. notice that the recognition of any force as acting under law within our own being, of itself invests this force with a special and resistless authority. We cannot but respond to it with respect and reverence. It is not ourselves framing a law for ourselves arbitrarily or in caprice, but ourselves meeting a law imposed upon us by our inmost nature. Any force stronger than ourselves, whether it acts from without, like the sun or the wind, or wells up from within the mysterious springs of our inner life, awakens our respect. The recognition of an activity as one for which our nature is fitted, involves an authority still higher, because it commends itself to our reverence for rational order. It is not our caprice that imposes this authority, not our voluntary will, nor any single impulse or

desire, but our nature as a whole, in the mutual adaptation of all its impulses, and their harmonious working with the forces of the universe. It is not a mere blind force, or combination of forces, but an adjustment that is rational in its adaptation, and working for the highest ends known or conceivable by us.¹ There is no authority more majestic than that of self-conviction concerning our capacities as revealing our destined functions, when enforced by self-approbation or self-reproach. If the action is our own, and the law is self-imposed by the discernment of the consenting reason, our anticipated self-approval or self-reproach obliges or binds us, as nothing else can, by a triple bond to voluntary allegiance to duty.

§ 63. We have said already that the feeling of obligation, as men ordinarily experience and recognize it, is rarely limited to man's self-imposed or personal commands or prohibitions. As men meet one another in society, so soon as their favor and dislike are known by the necessary operations of human nature to lie in wait for the right and wrong purposes and actions of their fellows, this anticipated favor or displeasure usually re-enforces the elementary feeling of obligation by which the man enforces the law of duty upon himself.

Most men, also, in some form and to some extent, extend their thoughts beyond their kind, and lift them above nature, and recognize some sort of a "tendency not themselves working for righteousness." So soon as they do this, and recognize the law of duty to be the will of the Supreme, the feeling of obligation is at once re-enforced by the anticipated favor or displeasure of some power or person who "is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things."

¹ "Von diesen Punkten geht die strenge, unnachgiebige Forderung des sittlichen aus, jenes kategorische Soll, das an das besondere und an den Theil ergehend von einem Willen ausfließt wenn man anders die Quelle des Soll vom bedingten ins unbedingte verfolgt." — A. TRENDELENBURG: *Hist. Beiträge zur Philosophie*, Band iii., vi. (2), pp. 201-203.

§ 64. In the order of time, the human mind first understands by obligation some constraint imposed by the command of another. To the child the judgment, "I ought to do or refrain from this or that," signifies, my parent or teacher commands me, and will punish me if I fail or offend: the magistrate, or the community, or God, commands or forbids, and will reward or punish. In this sense it is eminently true that obligation supposes an obliger, and signifies "a violent motive resulting from the command of another." Such words as "to owe," "to be bound," and their equivalents, are largely derived from relations between man and man, that involve force and command on the one side, and fear and compulsion on the other. If we collate in the English, the French, or the German languages the prominent words that express or imply the relation of obligation, we shall find that they were all originally the relations of man to man, as of child or servant, or debtor or subject.

These external relations furnish the vocabulary for the internal authority of man over himself, but do not for that reason either originate or explain the relation itself, nor the ground of it, nor even the history of its progressive and complete development to the analytic consciousness. While in time our distinct knowledge of the external precedes that of the internal, the internal is not created out of the first, though it is suggested by it, and even expressed in terms taken from it. Very soon the two are blended together; and the one practically supplements the other, which it symbolizes and enforces to the advantage and strengthening of both. It is when one contradicts and resists the other that the tragedies of life within and without invariably follow. A man owes his debts none the less morally because the law adds its motives of a writ and a judgment to those of the conscience. We pay our debts because we owe them, in the sense of being forced by fear of the officer, and also from a conscience before God. But when the dues which the law

Obligation
originally
respects the
claim of
another.

The external
symbolizes
and suggests
the internal.

exacts, or public sentiment enforces, are inconsistent with the duties which the conscience enjoins, then it is that conflicts and scruples, and the tragedies of the heart and of life, ensue.

The feeling of obligation has long attracted the attention of theoretic moralists, and been supposed to be invested with a special mystery. This has been especially true since Kant made the categorical imperative so

**Supposed
mystery of
obligation.**

emphatic and distinctive an element in all ethical experiences, and excluded it from all relationship to the sensibility. Kant opposes the categorical to the hypothetical imperative, overlooking the fact that to his own categorical imperative he concedes a subtle hypothetical condition by enforcing the authority of its commands by their acknowledged fitness to become general laws. Kant, as is

**Kant's
categorical
imperative.**

well known, not only asserted for this imperative the claim of being the ethical feature by eminence, but he invested it with authority to enforce not only our duty, but our faith in God, as the condition of moral order, and the rewarder of virtue with happiness. A large class of moralists, on the other hand, have assumed that obligation involves the existence of two persons, related as ruler and subject by natural or conventional ties, and have insisted that obligation implies command on the one side, and subjection on the other. Thus Warburton asserts, "Obligation supposes an obliger, different and distinct from the person obliged;" and Paley, "A man is

**Warburton's
saying.**

obliged when he is urged by a violent motive resulting from the command of another," which he expands in his definition of virtue as "the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." Both these writers find no difficulty in explaining the term on that theory of morals which makes the positive command of God an essential condition of the authority of duty. In jurisprudence obligation is often derived wholly from the commands of positive law (cf. AUSTIN). In the theory of this work the personal and authoritative element and the related

**Theory of
this treatise.**

emotions are fully provided for by the recognition of that peculiarity in man's nature by which he is capable of being a law to himself; i.e., in virtue of the voluntary and self-conscious endowments of his being. Kant has occasionally recognized and eloquently asserted the truth that moral necessity is the superior will of man commanding his inferior will. Paul Janet writes thus:—

“Assuming all these premises, I conclude, that, in my opinion, the man cannot thus conceive his own ideal essence without wishing to realize this essence so far as it is possible. Moral necessity is, as Kant perceived, only the *superior will* of the man, laying commands on his *inferior will*. Man cannot wish to be any thing but a true man, a complete man; that is, to be actually what he is virtually. This will of the reason finds itself in conflict with the sensitive will. *The superior will, so far as it imposes authority upon the inferior will, is called obligation.*” — *The Theory of Morals*, book ii. chap. i. § 3, New York, 1883.

§ 65. Dr. Thomas Brown (Edinburgh, 1778-1820) gives the following analysis of the feeling and judgment of obligation:—

“Persons acting in a certain manner excite in us a feeling of approval: persons acting in a manner opposite to this cannot be considered by us without an emotion, perhaps as vivid or more vivid, of the opposite kind. Why does it seem to us virtue to act in this way? Why does he seem to us to have merit, or, in other words, to be worthy of approbation, who has acted in this way? The only answer which can be given to these questions is the same to all: that it is impossible for us to consider the action without feeling, that, by acting in this way, we should look upon ourselves, and others would look upon us, with abhorrence, or at least with disapprobation” (*Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, lect. 73). “*To feel this character of approvableness in an action which we have not yet performed, and are only meditating in the future, is to feel the moral obligation* or moral inducement to perform it. When we think of an action in the moment of volition, we term the voluntary performance of it ‘virtue:’ when we think of the action as already performed, we denominate it ‘merit’” (lect. 81).

These solitary passages are the more interesting and significant, as occurring in a writer whose tendency is to resolve all the phenomena of the soul into emotions, who makes little or nothing of the will, and does

only scant justice to the personality and self-consciousness of man; all of which are vital to any satisfactory theory of either the sentiment or judgment of obligation.

Hutcheson proposes and answers the question as follows: "If any ask, 'Can we have any sense of obligation abstracting from the laws of a superior?' we must answer according to the various senses of the word 'obligation.' If by obligation we understand a determination, without regard to our own interest, to approve the actions and to perform them, which determination *shall also make us displeased with ourselves, and uneasy upon having acted contrary to it*, in this meaning of the word 'obligation' there is naturally an obligation upon all men to benevolence." — *Inquiry*, pp. 266, 267.

**Hutcheson's
doctrine.**

He recognizes the opinion, current in his time, that obligation implies an obliger, thus: "When any sanctions co-operate with our moral sense in exciting us to actions which we count morally good, we say we are obliged; but when sanctions of rewards or punishments oppose our moral sense, then we say we are bribed or constrained." — p. 276.

Warburton, who was conspicuous for resolving all obligation into the command of God, — his pithy statement being "*Obligation supposes an obliger*," — thus writes to John Brown, M.D., the author of "*Essays on the Characteristics*:" —

"If you use 'obligation' in the sense of motive, then I apprehend *Shaftesbury*, *Clarke*, and *Wollaston* may say you differ, not from them, but in the use of a different term, which comes to the same thing. They call virtue *beautiful*, *fit*, and *true*, for the reason that you call it *beneficial*; namely, because it produces happiness: therefore, when they say the beauty, the fitness, the truth, of virtue is the motive for practising it, they say the very thing you do, as referring to the happiness of which virtue is productive, etc.

**Warburton's
criticism on
Shaftesbury,
Clarke, etc.**

"If, on the other hand, by motive you had meant, as understood by you, real obligation, you must still be in the wrong, if (as you hold) *Shaftesbury*, *Clarke*, and *Wollaston* be so; because, like them, you make real obligation to arise, as they do, from the nature of virtue, and not, as their real adversaries do, from the will of a superior: for their real adversaries do not say they are wrong in making it arise from this or that property of virtue, — such as its beauty, its fitness, or its truth, — but in their making it arise from an abstract idea at all, or, indeed, from any thing but personality, and the will of another, different and distinct from the person obliged" (*vide* **WARBURTON'S** *Letters*, pp. 57, 58). Of this we say, that *Warburton* is right in so far as he makes personality to be essential to obligation, but not necessarily the personality of "another, different and distinct from the person obliged;" inasmuch as the very essence and energy of the feeling depend on the fact that the two relations coincide in one and the same person. As to the fact whether the person obliging and the per-

son obliged can be the same, we have only to say, that, if this is impossible, self-consciousness and self-control are also impossible. And yet somehow it must be true, —

“that unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!”

The influence of Kant upon the ethical thought of modern times has in no one particular been so conspicuous as in his doctrine of moral obligation, or the categorical imperative, which he interprets in a sense which was original to himself, with which he connected a peculiar psychological theory, and of which he made a special philosophical application. Not a few writers, as has already been noticed, have accepted his general statement, who did not fully adopt the psychological or philosophical theory in which it held a unique and well-filled place. It was mainly through the influence of Coleridge that the theory and its application passed into very current favor with very many English and American writers, who have accepted it as the eloquently phrased doctrine of Clarke, Price, and Reid, without scrutinizing its logical consistency, or accepting its psychological or theological accompaniments. The simple statement that the categorical imperative is not only invested with the prerogative of simple authority, but that it commands us to believe in a personal and perfect God, has been accepted by very many as the corner-stone of ethical and theistic faith. It deserves careful notice, however, that the doctrine of Kant is not that the sense of obligation is derived from the personal authority of God as sanctioning the law of duty, but that the command of duty *requires* us to believe in God in order that he may enforce this law by reward and punishment. We do not first believe in God, and subsequently accept the obligation of duty from the command of God; but we find the moral law commanding us to believe in him axiomatically. The truth for which we contend is, that the contemplation of right action as the supreme end of our being leads us, in scientific thought and faith, to a God who is personal and morally good; but it does not make moral obligation to proceed from the simple will or command of God, for the obligation would exist were there no God.

For this reason, such language as the following, from J. A. Froude, is liable to misinterpretation, if it is not palpably erroneous:

J. A. Froude. “So far as we know, morality rests upon the sense of obligation; and obligation has no meaning except as implying a divine command, without which it would cease to be.” — *Life of John Bunyan*, chap. ix.

Herbert Spencer, in entire consistency with his theory, analyzes moral obligation into two elements,—the element of *authority*, which he interprets as the known excellence of the good impulse or act; and the element of *coerciveness*, which he derives from the several forms of social restraint to which man is subject,—the political, religious, and social (cf. *LOCKE'S Three Laws*, § 41). The

Different interpretations of Kant.

Herbert Spencer.

second of these elements, in the order of evolution, will fade away; i.e., "the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory, and will be diminished as fast as moralization increases" (*Data of Ethics*, § 46). Kant asserts the same of his categorical imperative, but for a different reason: viz., that the sensibilities or passions will eventually cease to struggle with the categorical imperative; and holiness, or a state of loving consent, shall at last completely displace the resisting and struggling sensibility. It is worthy of notice, that neither Kant nor Spencer finds any place for personality, and scarcely for freedom, in their psychological theory; although Kant's provides for it as an ethical necessity. It is not surprising that the ethical theory of both fails satisfactorily to explain the feeling of obligation. James Martineau, in a brief essay (London, 1881, *On the Relation between Ethics and Religion*), surprises us by insisting that no proper ethics can be constructed which do not imply God as necessarily and naturally known to the soul, and enforcing the law of duty as his personal will; which is the exact converse of the doctrine of Kant, though obviously inspired by Kant's analysis of obligation.

Kant's relation to Spencer.

James Martineau.

§ 66. (3) A third class of emotions are those of *merit or demerit, or of good and ill desert*. These, for similar reasons, are, with the sense of obligation, very frequently conceived of as judgments, — shaded off, perhaps, into the emotions which attend them. A moment's reflection will convince any one that they suppose and imply the existence of a community of moral beings. It is of his fellow-men or his Creator that a man is said and conceded to deserve good or evil: it is only in a remote and secondary way that he can be said to deserve good or evil of himself. It being implied that men live in a community, if *A* feels or acts rightly or wrongly, we think and say, *A* deserves good or evil from *B, C, D*, and all the rest. We do not say we believe that *B, C, D*, and all the rest, will, in fact, show love and complacency to *A* when he acts rightly, or dislike when he acts wrongly; but we do believe and say, that, if they do this in fact, *they will approve their own acts, and, if they do the opposite, they will disapprove them*. We think and say this with confidence, because we believe that all men are alike in their moral nature. The merit or demerit of

(3) Sense of merit and demerit.

Supposes society,—a complex emotion.

purposes and actions is their capacity to elicit or command from others such feelings of approval or disapproval as the bestowers themselves shall approve or disapprove. As is true of self-approbation and its converse self-reproach, as also of obligation to do or avoid, so is it of merit and demerit: all are affirmable of the actions and feelings or purposes, — first of the feelings or purposes, and then of the *actions* which are their expression or effects. Whatever action or choice would occasion these feelings before or after it was achieved, we say was obligatory to do or to avoid, was meritorious or demeritorious; i.e., was well or ill deserving. This transfer from inward feeling to outward act is by a common figure of language.

CHAPTER X.

OBJECTIONS, REPLIES, AND COUNTER-OBJECTIONS.

§ 67. To the analysis which has been given of the processes by which our moral conceptions are gained, with their attendant emotions, the following objections are urged : —

(1) These processes suppose acts of reflection and comparison of which we are not conscious in every, perhaps not in any, case when we discern these relations, and experience these emotions.

Objections to
our theory.

(1) The processes re-
quired sup-
pose impossi-
ble acts of
reflection.

To this we reply, that the theory does not require us to hold that in every instance, or in the majority of instances, when we think ethical conceptions, or employ ethical terms, we must go through these successive steps, and discern these several relations, but only that when their import is first discerned, or subsequently analyzed into its elements, they must involve these processes and products. This is true of the majority of the complex concepts which we constantly employ, of the most and the least familiar alike. When we have once mastered their content, we rarely dwell upon the elements. It often happens that a single relation of a very complicated concept is all that we need to recognize for its intelligent application. But

Reflection
needed to
gain, but not
to apply
them.

when we seek to define such a concept, or inquire whether it is simple or complex, and when we inquire how it originated, or of what elements it consists, it presents itself in new aspects, and suggests other inquiries.

We perform many a complicated process of analysis, or unite several elements by elaborate synthesis, without being aware that we do either. Most of the processes involved in the acquired perceptions, especially of sight or hearing, when familiar, are achieved with a rapidity which forbids that they should be followed by the analytic or reflective consciousness. Few of these processes can be recalled by the memory. We see and hear, as by insight or intuition, the form, size, and distance, with the properties which are appropriate to the other senses. We do not notice, we do not half believe, that we compare and judge and interpret in order to determine what is indicated; but we seem to ourselves to hear, perceive, or see the object directly as a whole, without analysis or definition. And yet we know, that, without many processes of judgment and interpretation, we could not perform the acts, nor gain the knowledge, nor experience the emotions, which we are certain we gain and feel.

(2) It is objected again, that this theory requires that moral relations and emotions should be experienced at an incredibly early age. To this we reply, that even in infancy we are fully equal to many achievements of thought and feeling which are no less surprising than those required by our theory. Indeed, so soon as the human being awakes to distinct and rememberable consciousness, he finds himself in possession of a large stock of familiar conceptions and emotions and habits, which he knows must have been accumulated in what seems to him to have been the dim and early dawn of his inner life. It should also be remembered, that, whatever be our theory, moral relations, when first discovered, are not apprehended in the abstract

(2) Implies
that moral
distinctions
should be
originated
at too early
an age.

but in the concrete form, and even then not as exemplified in the feelings and actions of adults, but of infants; not as applied to the imposing and vague abstractions of advanced reflection, but as illustrated in the trivial yet definite claims and responses of childhood.

Even the axioms of geometry are not self-evident to childhood in the generalized phraseology of the schools; and yet they are as obvious to the child as to the man, when applied to the quanta which the child manipulates. The same is eminently true of the relations of morality in the early dawn of conscious activity.

Our theory does not require the enlarged conceptions and the complex emotions of reflective manhood, but only such as are possible to infancy, and upon the materials that are within the infant's experience, and are familiar to an infant's observation. Let there be only two conflicting desires struggling for the mastery, each known to the inward eye as naturally better or worse, one chosen, the other rejected when within its reach, and the child has all that it needs to think of in order to discern the relations of moral good and evil, and to experience the attendant emotions of self-approval and obligation and merit. The process of discernment is performed necessarily and instantaneously. The child has only to reflect, and reflection only to be energetic and comparative, and in an instant consciousness springs into the activity of conscience; the conscience giving an end, a standard, a self-judgment, and self-approval or self-reproach. What an instant before was a sportive arena has suddenly become a solemn tribunal, which gives a more elevated import and a more serious aspect to all the future activities of human life and experience. The eyes are opened as by magic to a universe of new relations: the knowledge of good and evil is attained as in an instant.

Requires only such relations as an infant can master.

It should also be remembered, that every theory which does not explain moral concepts by relations from without, but derives them from within, requires these very processes of reflection to *apply*, which this theory requires to *originate*, moral law and moral emotions. Those who begin with rational intuitions, or the categorical imperative, or the responses of the moral sense, require a measure of that reflective comparison in order to *apply* the standard or law which this theory demands for its origination. Every ethical theory seems, at first thought, beyond the reach of an infant's power of inward reflection. It follows, that an objection which applies equally to all can be fatal to no one.

(3) It is objected still further, that the theory, in its final analysis, resolves morality into selfish relations and affections.¹ To this we reply, first of all, it does not of necessity resolve morality into any relations to good or happiness which are sensitive as distinguished from the voluntary. There are those who hold that moral excellence is defined as the choice of the highest natural good, who seem to contend that there is a natural good which in itself gives no happiness, or at least that this natural happiness should not be known to the subject of it.

Resolves moral into selfish relations.

Leaving this subtle refinement, and conceding that the highest natural good in man or in any sensitive being must involve sensitive satisfaction, it does not follow that the theory which defines moral excellence as the choice of those objects which give the highest sensitive good is a selfish theory. Selfishness, it should always be remembered, is a *voluntary* preference of private and separate good to the good of others. It can have no possible application to the *natural* exercise of a *natural* sensibility, whether it be high or low, self-terminating or altruistic. But selfishness is excluded by the very fundamental assumption of the theory that man is capable of disinterested delight in the good of others, and that this is a nobler happiness than any form of individual or separate gratification. But it is urged, if we make this happiness which is incident to natural love to be a motive to voluntary love by thinking of it, or apprehending its presence, we exclude the disinterestedness of our loving, and of course we destroy its virtuousness. To this we reply, that it is true, that in order to love, and so far as we love, whether by a natural or a voluntary affection, we must think of the object which is loved, and often be so absorbed in this object as to fail to notice the blessedness of loving. Whether

¹ See A. TRENDLENBURG, *Der Widerstreit zwischen Kant und Aristoteles in der Ethik*; (1) *Die Lust und das ethische Princip. Hist. Beiträge*, etc., 3ter Band, vi.; (2) also H. LOTZE, *Der Mikrokosmos*, 5tes Buch, 5tes Kapitel; *Das Gewissen und die Sittlichkeit*.

the love is an affection which we cannot repress, or which we voluntarily allow, it can exist only so far and so long as the mind is moved by the object loved, i.e., so long as the object is loved for its own sake. Whenever we love, or howsoever we love, we love the object, not the happiness or satisfaction which loving involves. But, on the other hand, when the man *estimates* the quality of his love, whether it is natural or voluntary, he is no longer an actor, going out from himself objectively, but has become a judge, looking in upon himself subjectively; and he cannot avoid judging each affection as to the quality of the satisfaction which it gives. Judging it thus, he cannot but measure it by the capacities of subjective or sensitive good which his nature provides. Whether or not this estimate is a moral estimate, it is not inconsistent with the unselfishness of a voluntary affection, so long as the voluntary act of loving must be disinterested in order to be love at all.

The position of a judge differs from that of an actor.

These two movements or elements of our nature — the outward or objective, and the reflex or subjective — must go together. They cannot be antagonistic as impelling or directing forces. They cannot be mutually exclusive. The attempt to show that the moral impulse and the desire of happiness are incompatible, or have no possible relations, has invariably failed in theory and practice.

We say truly of the impulses of voluntary benevolence, and indeed of every impulse which is merely emotional or natural, that the good of another must fill and control the thoughts, and move the sensibility. But it is also true, that while a man is loving his friend, or pitying a sufferer, he cannot avoid being conscious that his loving or pitying experience opens to him the highest and noblest satisfaction of which his nature is capable. As this consciousness deepens into reflection, it enables him to judge of the quality of every affection and impulse. It is most true, that, when we love our neighbor, it is our neighbor and not ourselves whom we love; but, when we *judge* whether it is better to love or to hate him, we must know which impulse of our own is the most satisfying good, both in quality and in degree. This knowledge we cannot hide from

Voluntary benevolence, when exercised and estimated, is alike unselfish.

our thoughts when we are impelled to choose between our neighbor or ourselves, as the objects of voluntary affection. The special desire which this knowledge awakens in our sensibility is in no sense selfish; for this element is a response that is common to all choices and all impulses, the benevolent and the selfish alike. The object which secures the highest good is chosen *for its own sake*, in the most eminent sense which is possible (§ 10). The intrinsic worth of the object as truly sways the soul according to this analysis as according to any other. The only question of any possible importance is whether natural good is the foundation of moral goodness as explained by our analysis. If this is answered in the affirmative, the relation of natural good to happiness may be left open as a question of psychological dissection and speculative definition, in which refined scholastics and lofty sentimentalists may alternately find vexation and delight.

(4) It may be urged still further, that this theory does not explain the sense of obligation. The soul's response to obligation, it is urged, in its nature is not an emotion; and no analysis or comparison can find relationship between the two. To Kant, it will be said, belongs the especial honor of emphasizing *respect for obligation* as the distinctive element by which moral actions are elevated above any possible affinity with happiness. And yet, as we have already observed, Kant makes it an axiom in ethics that the servant of duty *ought* to be made happy. He even makes this axiom the corner-stone of his faith in a personal God, whom it *obliges* man to believe, in order that the strife between happiness and virtue may be adjusted. It is true, obligation as a feeling and a relation is peculiar and by itself; but this by no means proves that obligation, in the last analysis, is not resolved into a feeling. It is conceded that the emotion must be peculiar, while yet it is contended that this peculiar emotion arises from the fact that it only is felt when man is law-giver, judge, and executioner to himself. That obligation is akin to hope and fear is too evident to need enforcement. It is because the emotion is unique that men appeal to what they call the sense of obligation with the utmost confidence, and that obligation carries with it supreme authority. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise;

inasmuch as in the experience of it man deals directly with himself, and is at once the inflicter and sufferer, the rewarder and the recipient. Its conditions being unique, the emotion and experience ought also to be unique.

Were any additional evidence required, it would be found in the close affinity between the response to the law imposed within, and the law when re-enforced from without, — in the command uttered by the magistrate or the Supreme, and the command imposed by the inner law-giver, the man himself. It is not denied that in the one case the response is a response of sensibility, and it ought not to be denied that it may be so in the other.

(5) An objection might be urged against the use made in the foregoing analysis of the relation of design or purpose, that this knowledge supposes an actual trial of the excellence of virtue as the ground of imposing or accepting it as the law of our being. This, it may be urged, would suppose a previous knowledge of the moral law, which would require a previous knowledge of moral relations; and this would require us to fall back on the categorical imperative, or the moral sense. Trendelenburg (*Hist. Beiträge*, 3ter Band, vi. (2)) endeavors to save the theory of end or purpose from the Kantian and the Aristotelian objection by making the intellectual apprehension of design to be original and ultimate, while the sensitive pleasure and pain are subsequent, and not precedent, to the act of choice. It is doubtless true, that the experience of moral good and evil by actual trial gives such vivid convictions concerning their reality and importance as no previous anticipation would suggest; but it by no means follows, that in what man knows, or might know, of his natural capacities, there is not the amplest material for the interpretation of the ends for which he was designed, and the erection of this ideal into a law for his purposes and actions (cf. § 54).

(5) Supposes
an actual
trial of right
and wrong.

OBJECTIONS TO THE ANTAGONIST THEORIES.

§ 68. The theories which we reject have already been described. They have this feature in common, that they all derive the ethical relations and emotions from man as an individual, as contrasted with those which hold

Counter-
objections.

them to be the products of society. The first is called *the intuitional* theory, and teaches that the moral relations are simple and indefinable, being apprehended by a direct intuition of the intellect, and followed by emotions which cannot be explained by the relations discerned.

We reject this theory for the following reasons: —

(1) It is unphilosophical if it is unnecessary. The law of parsimony, *Entia non multiplicanda præter necessitatem*, eminently holds good of the needless multiplication of intuitions or original categories. Whatever conception or relation can be explained as a complex of simple elements, or whatever intellectual process or emotional experience can be resolved into simpler acts or emotions that are known to be natural and necessary to man, is more rationally explained by such elements and processes than as an original emotional or philosophical intuition or experience. If the analysis which we have given of the moral qualities and emotions satisfactorily explains the same, it sets aside the necessity of the intuitional theory, and stamps it as unphilosophical.

(2) This theory contradicts the testimony of consciousness. If our analysis is correct, moral relations are the products of the process of judging our voluntary achievements by a norm or standard taken from the ends or aims which are indicated in the nature of man. It cannot be denied that every human being originates or interprets these conceptions in the way which has been described. These conceptions are unintelligible to any human being who does not interpret their meaning by the elements or materials furnished by this conscious experience. His personal experience of these phenomena, with the relations which they involve, must cover the entire import of these terms. To add to these elements, all of which are confessedly necessary, another relation or conception which has no conceivable relation to them, or dependence upon them, is manifestly irrational.

To concede and to contend that a moral action must be free, rational, reflective, involving the choice between our higher and lower natural capacities, and yet to assert that none of these indispensable elements enter into or explain the import of the act as moral, is not only to contradict our conscious experience, but is to do violence to the axioms of philosophic thinking (§ 52). It is to assert that moral relations are inexplicable and indefinable, and yet to assert that no act or choice can possibly be moral in which certain definite and well-known elements are not present. It is to assert that a concept is undefinable which we forthwith proceed to define, if not by its constituent logical elements, at least by its psychological conditions; that a concept is simple which we forthwith treat as complex in our analysis of its elements or conditions, one or both (cf. § 59).

(3) This theory adds to an original category a relation which is confessedly capable of being subsumed under another category. Right action or volition is confessed to be the action or volition to which man is adapted by his nature and circumstances. This proposition postulates adaptation or design to be objectively true of the universe of fact, and subjectively valid as an axiom for the interpretation of its phenomena. Whether this axiom may be assumed as a metaphysical axiom which is absolutely or relatively ultimate, is of little consequence for our purpose, so long as moral relations can and must be subsumed under it, and defined by it. No original category which takes rank as an intuition can possibly be subsumed under or defined by another intuition.

(3) Super-
adds a rela-
tion that is
superfluous.

The only answer which can possibly be made to this argument is, that, while moral relations are capable of being stated in terms of adaptation, they cannot be defined by them. This must mean, that, while the relations of adaptation must necessarily be affirmed of moral relations, some indefinable quality or relation called their rectitude, or the want of it, must be added, to constitute or complete the definition. But if the other attributes do, in fact, distinguish these related concepts from concepts of every other

class, they satisfy all the conditions required, and exclude the necessity, and even the possibility, that these so-called additional relations should be recognized as original.

We admit, that, for the purposes of expounding moral science as an independent and separate science, these complex moral relations may be postulated as ultimate. Moreover, after they are assumed and justified and defined, their supremacy is such as to give significance to every other practical impulse. Hence their supremacy over other impulses and motives may often be recognized as practically conceded. It does not follow, however, that when traced in their psychological growth, and analyzed into their philosophical elements, they may not and must not take their place with the science of which they are the postulates, and both rest on those common relations which psychology uncovers, and philosophy jealously guards, as the deep and broad foundations on which all the sciences stand together, and are held in common bonds.

(4) We reject this theory because it connects with a purely intellectual and indefinable intuition a class of emotions which have no discoverable relation to that which is claimed to be an intuition, nor to one another. These emotions are the emotions of self-approbation or self-condemnation, of obligation to do or abstain, of merit or demerit. That man, on the recognition of an act or feeling as moral, should experience these three emotions, is a matter of constant occurrence; but that a single relation should originate these three several emotions, and with so slight a change in the conditions, and that the relation itself should throw no light upon the product, is contrary to all the analogies of the production of emotion in similar cases. As has already been intimated, much is made, in this connection, of the mysterious and peculiar attribute of authority which is supposed to be inseparable from the intuitions of right and wrong. Says Dugald Stewart, "It is absurd, therefore, to ask why we are obliged to practise virtue. The very notion of virtue implies the notion of obligation." Similarly, Kant and Butler urge that the moral differ from the other impulses in man, in that they assert for themselves an original supremacy or authority, — a right to take and keep the precedence in any case of con-

(4) Cannot
account for
the ethical
emotions.

flict. This authority we do not question. The more clearly it is recognized, and its import is explained, the more difficult is it to explain the origination of such a sentiment with such authority, at the summons of an intellectual category analogous to causation or spatiality.

Kant has pertinently observed (whether consistently with his general theory, we do not affirm) that obligation, or moral authority, is the superior will of man, commanding his inferior will.¹ If this is true (and that it is we have contended elsewhere), then a metaphysical category cannot possess the power to evoke such an emotion as that of confessed subjection, much less two other emotions in its train, like those of self-approbation and merit. The elements of authority and obligation seem to us to inhere only in a personal being, i.e., either the man dealing with himself or with other beings. Least of all, can they be conceived of as belonging to a rational category or ultimate thought-relation (cf. WARBURTON, as quoted on p. 161).

(5) This theory confounds the rapidly formed and quickly applied judgments and the attendant emotions of mature life with judgments which are known to be intuitive, and with instinctive impulses which are original, and incapable of analysis. It finds evidence in the rapidity, precision, and confidence with which the moral judgments are pronounced, that they are intuitive and simple. Most of the popular, and not a few of the scientific, defenders of this theory contend that these features are decisive of its truth. The human mind, they contend, affirms these relations too early to be able to distinguish and to interpret their elements. It applies them too quickly and too positively for the unpractised mind of infancy. The objector overlooks the fact, which cannot be questioned, that these relations, be they simple or be they complex, are never affirmed by the infant, except as the result of introverted reflection and intelligent comparison. No child ever masters these elementary

(5) **Con-
founds intui-
tional judg-
ments with
those rapidly
formed.**

¹ It should be noticed, in interpreting Kant, that he uses "will" by no means as distinguished from the sensibility, but more frequently as blended with it, and the complex agent of the phenomena of impulsive desire.

conceptions, or feels these rudimentary emotions, except it first looks within, commands, judges, and enforces by an inner reward or penalty, that is, performs all the processes which our theory involves.

Moreover, as we have argued elsewhere, during infancy a very wide range of the acquired perceptions is mastered; giving command over complicated processes of judgment by the eye, the ear, and the hand. What is most important to notice, these processes are handled so dexterously, and the results are accepted so quickly and positively, as to seem to be neither processes nor products, but intuitive judgments directly pronounced, and simple emotions instinctively felt. No phenomenon is more familiar, and yet none is more surprising, than the rapid and unreflecting, and yet not unintelligent, use which the infant mind makes of conceptions which are complex in their elements, and which are painfully analyzed long after they are familiarly applied.

(6) This theory is logically self-contradictory. It makes moral goodness to be, in the language of Locke, “a simple idea,” either of quality or relation. It affirms rightness of an action as we affirm roundness of a circle; but the action of which it affirms this quality is a volition, or an act of choice. A choice, however, is in every instance a choice of some object. This being so, the advocate of the theory finds himself shut up to the following dilemma: the right choice must be either the choice of the right object, or the right choice of an object which is not itself right, i.e., not morally good. If he takes the first position, then rightness belongs to the object chosen, and not to the act of choosing; and it also follows that voluntariness is not essential to the conception of rightness. If he takes the second, he denies that rightness is a simple idea; for he defines the right choice to be the choice of something, which, whatever it may be, has no moral quality, and concedes that the conception is resolved into two elements, — the object, and the act of choice. The advocates of the theory must either be content to deny that right is an original intuition or quality, or deny that it belongs to a volition, or accept the alternative of asserting that moral quality

(6) Is self-contradictory.

can belong to the object chosen, or to the act of choosing an object which is not itself necessarily moral.

Compare the "Introduction to Ethics," etc., from the French of Th. Jouffroy (Boston, 1840, lects. xxii., xxiii.), for an extended criticism of this theory as held by Price. In this criticism, Jouffroy insists at great length that moral good is necessarily a choice of natural good; and that consequently moral good cannot be a simple, but must be a complex idea, and is consequently definable. Moreover, it involves the recognition of an end as an essentially constituent element upon which he argues thus: "If, then, an action can be judged only by its relation to its end, this end must be perceived before it is judged, and only from the nature of the end can that of the action be determined; so that an act will be good if it has a certain end, or evil by its relation of conformity to some other end. The goodness of actions is not, therefore, the only goodness: there is also a goodness of ends. Again: in determining that there are good ends, we obtain a definition of that which is good in itself; and, as the goodness of acts is their conformity to good ends, we obtain also a definition of this moral goodness, or of the quality assumed to be indefinable." — Vol. ii. p. 327; cf. also PAUL JANET, *La Morale*, Paris, 1874; Preface, English translation, New York, 1883.

(7) The theory is equally impracticable when applied to concrete examples. Right and wrong, it is said, are original and indispensable relations; and yet they are affirmable of volitions which can show no common relationship with one another to justify this affirmation. Truth, justice, temperance, courtesy, are respectively right. But what this rightness may be, which is common to all, we cannot define or explain. We can give no reason why we assert that any and every one of them is right. We can give no reason why we ought to perform these righteous actions, except that they are right. Moreover, when these claims or obligations seem to conflict, we can give no reason why one should be preferred or sacrificed to another. They are equally obligatory if equally right, and equally right if each one is right of itself. One can be no more right than the other. All stand upon the same plane, all are impelled by the same motives, all are enforced by the same authority.

(7) Incapable
of consistent
application
in practice.

Moreover, as Jouffroy urges against Price, the hypothesis makes it impossible to conceive that there should be any difference of opinion in respect to questions of practical morality. "But, if this is true, what is the consequence? It is as follows: that all men are equally capable of appreciating the morality of actions, and consequently equally enlightened in moral judgment; that in this respect, therefore, there can be no difference between the learned and the ignorant, and men of different ages; that moral science, consequently, cannot be developed and enforced with the progress of civilization, but that savages must be equally well informed with ourselves; that the morality of no action can be proved or deduced from that of other actions, and consequently that morality can neither be reduced to a system nor taught; and, finally, that what we call ethics cannot be a science, or, if it is so, that it can be nothing more than a catalogue of actions discovered by reason to be good or bad." — *Introd.*, etc., vol. ii. pp. 309, 310.

(8) The intuitionist theory introduces a speculative and practical incongruity between the supposed insensitive moral reason and man's instinctive and irrepressible desire for his personal well-being. The principal motive which inspires the defenders of this theory is to provide for the disinterestedness of human virtue by clearing the conception of moral goodness from any element or relation of human happiness; it being assumed, that, if virtue is defined, the definition must include some relation to man's sensitive nature.

This is well intended, no doubt; but it should be remembered, on the other hand, that a motive to virtue which does not find its sphere of action among the natural sensibilities may be too stately to be human, and too unreal to be true. Moreover, the simple desire of happiness is an impulse which is ineradicable, and at least innocent. It is also the root of some of the noblest special impulses and individual virtues. To fail to recognize it is unphilosophical, while to attempt to flout or to deny it, tempts to affectation in theory and to hypocrisy in practice. It would seem to be a recommendation rather than an objection to any theory, that it adjusts a theoretical and practical strife which is as unreasonable as it is unnatural. On

the other hand, it ought to be a fatal objection to the intuitional theory, that it opens an impassable chasm of thought between duty and happiness, and incites and fomenta a perpetual conflict between the two strongest motives that animate human nature, — the desire of virtue and the desire of well-being.

This chasm was never opened more widely than by Kant's ethical system, and Nature never had her revenge in a more signal way than in the inconsistencies and concessions of Kant himself.

Hermann Lotze most justly remarks upon this feature of Kant's system (*Mikrokosmos*, vol. ii. p. 314), "Doubtless that is of inferior worth which corresponds only to a momentary and accidental condition, or an individual peculiarity of the temper on which an impression may fall; greater is the worth of that which is in harmony with the universal and normal features of that organization by means of which the spirit is qualified to fulfil its destiny; the highest of all may be that which would favor the permanent mood of an ideal disposition, from whose internal states every deviation from the end of its development was effaced. Any thing higher than these, there cannot be. The thought of any thing which is somehow unconditionally valuable, that does not show its value by its capacity to give happiness, overleaps itself and that which it would bring to pass. Doubtless it was a praiseworthy rigor of practical philosophy that desired to free all the laws of duty from even a sidewise respect to the advantage of the agent; but it was unjust in this rigor to seek to separate the manifest and undeniable connection, in which, notwithstanding the despised, and in most of its applications the despicable notion of happiness stands to the other notion of intrinsic worth."

Lotze's criticism on Kant.

Friedrich Ueberweg writes in Fichte's *Zeitschrift* (vol. xxxiv. p. 78), "The true system of idealistic realism does not, with Kant and Herbart, reject all respect to the result aimed at, as a determining ground of moral action. Just as little does it with the Utilitarians and Hedonists find the moral norm in the object gained, or more exactly in the highest measure of happiness, but in the relations of its worth. The highest energy, and the highest pleasure necessarily connected therewith, must be sought for, but the highest qualitatively. All our inspirations and endeavors must be directed to that activity and pleasure which is of the highest and most spiritual worth." — Cf. also Professor E. PFLEIDERER, *Eudämonismus und Egoismus; Jahrbücher für prot. Theologie*, 6ter Jahrgang, i., ii., iii., iv., Leipzig, 1880: also *Kantischer Kriticismus und Englische Philosophie; Fichte's Zeitschrift*, 1880–81.

Ueberweg's.

(9) The intuitional theory sanctions and inspires an irreconcilable strife between the love of goodness, and obedience to duty, for their own sake, and out of respect to those motives which are always auxiliary, and often indispensable, to moral excellence. This objection, in principle, is akin to the last; and yet it assumes a definite theoretical and practical form for itself. To be moved by the commands and threatenings, even of a perfect God, according to the intuitional theory, is to respond to motives that are addressed to the sensitive rather than the moral nature; and yet motives of this sort are found to be practically effective, and even essential, to give full effect to the motives which are purely moral. The extreme position to which Kant was driven by the logical rigor of his theory, against the need and the desirableness of influences distinctly religious, is a single example of the disastrous consequences which have followed the extreme positions of the intuitionalists. These consequences have not been confined to the schools: they have penetrated everywhere into practical life. Personality in God, supernatural manifestations in human history, the authority of his will, the desire to please and the dread of offending him, have often been driven out from the faith of thinkers, and lost their hold of many who were not logicians by profession, by the conclusion, that if virtue shines by its own light, and commands by its own authority, then the authority of either man or God to enforce her behests is a needless superfluity, an incongruous hinderance or a fatal obstacle to the highest forms of goodness. And yet subjection to personal authority in God and man, and training by personal love, have been found to be practically indispensable. Even Kant himself abandons the logical consistency of his theory, when he makes his categorical imperative to summon God into being, that he may reward virtue with the happiness, and punish vice with the misery, to which his theory had made both to be sublimely and conscientiously indifferent. It may be taken for granted, that a theory which

involves itself in practical difficulties so serious cannot be thoroughly sound in its principles.

II. The two other alternative theories are Hutcheson's theory of the moral sense, and Kant's theory of the practical reason with its categorical imperative. Each will need but a brief notice.

The theory of the moral sense finds the germ or nucleus of all moral qualities in certain original emotions or sentiments. It is questioned by some, whether its advocates intend wholly to exclude the intellectual

II. The
theory of
moral sense.

element from their moral sense. There can be no question that their theory lays the chief stress on that which is emotional. Interpreting the theory thus, it finds man to be so constituted as to feel certain emotions on occasion of certain voluntary activities of his own or of his fellow-men. Certain of these activities please him, others displease him. The actions which please him he approves, as also the person who performs them; those which offend him he disapproves and condemns, whether they are purposes, emotions, or deeds. The activities and persons which please him he also pronounces morally good, while those which offend him are morally evil. The capacity to be thus affected towards actions and their originators he calls "the moral sense." It is obvious that this moral sense is conceived

by the most, if not by all of its advocates, as analogous to the æsthetic sensibility, i.e., as a capacity to be directly pleased or displeased by certain personal

Analogous
to æsthetic
sensibility.

affections. Why we are thus affected we cannot explain: we only know the occasions or causes of these contrasted emotions. This moral sensibility being supposed, the functions of the intellect with respect to it are very readily defined and explained. The intellect simply recognizes the acts or feelings which please or displease the moral sense, and judges and names them and their authors to be morally good or bad, very much as in sense-perception the sensible qualities, pre-eminently the secondary, are defined by the sense-affections which they excite. The intellect can give no reason for its favorable or

unfavorable judgments. Both these are resolved into an original taste or distaste, which the moral sense experiences and makes possible. The sensibility simply precedes and furnishes the material for the intellectual action. It is the germinant nucleus or principle from which all the subsequent judgments and emotions are evolved. Its affections are to be taken as ultimate and inexplicable facts. Against these original and ultimate likings and dislikings, no appeal can be taken; because these emotions of pleasure and pain are original. Not infrequently this faculty is termed "an instinct," or "the moral instinct;" and its affections are called "instinctive." The superior force or impelling power of the right affections is found in the superior quality of the affections themselves, added to the pleasure furnished by the moral sensibility, when contrasted with the inferior character of the vicious affection, added to the distaste of the moral sense.

The defects of this theory are the following: It is not rational, as we have already asserted of the intuitionist theory, if it is not required to explain the facts. It does not correspond with our conscious experience, which, so far as it can testify, affirms that the moral emotions do not precede, but follow, the acts of rational judgment, and are dependent on the same for their peculiar quality. It makes the ultimate moral standard changeable and arbitrary, inasmuch as it depends on the taste of the individual. Should the moral faculty be conceived to be analogous to the bodily sense, its affections, as we know, must depend on the joint activities of material agents and the responsive organism. Should either of these factors change, or both, the effect would change, and might even be reversed. If its analogue is found in the æsthetic sensibility, the adage would apply as properly to the ethical as to the æsthetic experiences, *De gustibus non est disputandum*. If the analogies from either cannot be accepted, the objection still remains that an unreasoning emotion can never be made the basis of those judgments which so often require careful inductions, the weigh-

ing of evidence and testimony, and the consideration of tendencies and results. All these processes are confessedly intellectual, and it scarcely seems probable that each and all of them find an ultimate factor and germinal element in an emotion which pleases or displeases the sensibility. The presence of these processes would imply that *the ultimate* in morals is a relation discerned by the intellect, which is capable of being affirmed as a rule or law. The theory of the moral sense, moreover, provides for none of the emotions which we have recognized as distinctively ethical, neither for self-satisfaction, nor obligation, nor merit, and in this is seriously and even fatally defective.

III. Kant's theory of the practical reason moves in the same line with the theory of the moral sense; although it professes altogether to set aside the sensibilities in the moral experiences, and to find the primitive element of all in the categorical imperative or unconditional obligation. But the subjective correlate of this categorical imperative is, in the last analysis, nothing more than a blind emotion. In the Kantian theory, the practical reason performs the functions of the moral sense, which is unrelated to any of the other functions which morality implies, and yet directs and controls them all. Consequently this theory is open to most of the objections that are urged against the theory of moral sense. Its claim to dispense with the emotions has most signally failed. The "reverence" before the law of duty, which it accepts and enforces, is itself a sentiment with the impelling force of a controlling emotion. The necessity which requires the existence and authority of God to meet the just claims of the good to be happy, we have already shown to be a confession that the rights of the sensibility and the law of well-being cannot be successfully overlooked in any moral theory. Even the superficial student of Kant cannot be struck with the difficulty which Kant finds in disposing of *Achtung*, or reverence before the law, without calling it a sensibility, and with the stress which drives

III. The theory of the practical reason.

Reverence before the law is a sensibility.

him to require for the experience of obligation an unnatural preponderance of the sensuous affections; implying a sense of constraint as the condition of the sense of duty, involving the paradox that virtue must resist in order to be sensitive to obligation, while holiness, as the higher state, feels no obligation, but is emancipated from the sense of duty in any form.

§ 69. The theories here expounded of the moral faculty, and the relations and feelings which it originates, may be advantageously compared with that which is taught by Bishop Butler, and is deservedly held in high esteem and authority. In general, we may say that Butler attempts no psychological analysis of the so-called moral faculty, his chief object being to establish its supremacy. He leaves it to his readers to select between four different appellatives for it, in the words, "whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason" (*Diss.*, II.). As to whether it is distinctly intellectual or emotional, he declines to give any opinion, except in the memorable words which seem to have accidentally escaped from him: "whether considered as a perception of the understanding, or as a sentiment of the heart, or, which seems the truth, as including both" (*Diss.*, II.).

All these theories, that of Butler included, are alike in the view which they take of the subject or object matter of the moral judgments and feelings, in so far as they all teach that right and wrong are affirmed only of acts or active states; "intentions" and "practical principles" being included under these designations. They differ, in that Butler implies, rather than asserts, that the voluntary power, both in act and state, is essential to moral responsibility. But he only implies this; and it is well known with what characteristic caution he avoids any metaphysical discussion of the doctrine of necessity, and limits himself to its relations to practice (*Analogy*, part i. chap. vi.). Much less does he attempt to explain by any careful psychological analysis the elements contributed by the will to the moral judgments and emotions.

He does indeed insist that there is "a principle of reflection" in man, which in its very nature is superior to every other, being invested with unquestioned "authority," and that to disobey this principle under the impulse of passion is to offend against its lawful supremacy. He does not, however, explain, or even imply, what relation this principle of reflection holds to self-consciousness, nor whence it derives its authority. The language which he uses, as it has been generally interpreted, would leave the impression that this principle of reflection is a special ethical endowment, whose functions are limited to the ethical experiences; being in its nature

The theory
of Bishop
Butler.

Butler gives
no analysis
of the moral
faculty.

Defective
statement of
the principle
of reflection.

co-ordinate with the other impulses or sensibilities, except, that, when it comes into conflict with any, it is felt and owned to be supreme. He does not show how it gains an ideal of what is possible and desirable by the comparative study of man's nature, although he incidentally recognizes the fact that such a comparative judgment is made; still less does he explain for what reason and by what method it applies this ideal as an authoritative law.

The theory we hold is, that the so-called "principle of reflection" is none other than the endowment of self-consciousness, which not only discerns the presence, but judges of the natural quality or worth, of the various impulses which are the springs of feeling and action, and which give character to the motives between which we choose. It recognizes the self-conscious *ego*, and not a "sentiment" or "principle" as invested with authority; giving the law, which it finds within, to the will, and by it testing and judging its activity.

Butler does indeed insist that we judge of actions by a comparing of them with "the nature and capacities of our being," and in this may be said in a sense to imply all that we have distinguished in our analysis. This is true; but a more careful analysis seems to be required in order to show what this principle of reflection really is, how it operates, upon what material, and with what results. In other words, Butler fails to show that the capacities of man as natural endowments must first be discriminated, in order that the voluntary and intelligent use of them may be discerned to be morally right or wrong.

Following
nature ac-
cording to
Butler.

Butler makes an abundant and positive use of the end to which any voluntary agent is adapted, as essential to the existence and authority of moral relations; and, as a theist, he assumes that such ends involve design on the part of the Creator. But he nowhere emphasizes the necessary inference that the relation of fitness or adaptation enters into the ethical relations as a defining element. In Butler's time, what is now called finality, or teleology, was known as "final cause," and, though generally accepted and employed in natural theology, was not distinctly recognized as a metaphysical or scientific category, nor was its place as a relation fundamental to ethics formally recognized, except perhaps indirectly in Clark's "Fitness of Things."

Fails to do
justice to
final cause.

In respect to the feelings or emotions which are distinctly ethical, Butler's analysis is noticeably defective. Neither self-approbation nor self-reproach is subjected by him to any special inquiry. The sense or feeling of obligation is not recognized distinctly as an emotion. Much as Butler makes of the authority of the conscience, he does not explain whether the response which is rendered to this authority is originally a feeling, or a judgment;

Does not
explain the
ethical emo-
tions.

i.e., whether it is a feeling founded on judgment, or a judgment founded on feeling. Merit and demerit he makes more of; but he does not attempt an analysis of their constituent elements, or a genesis of their growth. He does not ask whether intuition or emotion precedes, or whether there is any connection between the several classes of ethical emotions,—viz., between self-approbation, obligation, and merit, with their correlates,—either in origination or dependence. Our theory makes them to be interdependent in nature and origin, and in a sense to be naturally developed the one from the other. Compare in James Martineau's "Essays, Philosophical and Theological" (vol. ii. pp. 14-18, New York), his remarks upon Butler's theory, originally published in "The Prospective Review," November, 1845. We give the following extracts:—

“Every moral judgment is relative, and involves a comparison of two terms. When we praise what *has been* done, it is with the co-existent conception of something *else* that *might have been* done; and when we resolve on a course as right, it is to the exclusion of some other that is wrong. This fact, that every ethical decision is in truth a *preference*, an election of one act as higher than another, appears to us of fundamental importance in the analysis of the moral sentiments. . . .

“The preferential character attaching to all moral judgments is implied, and yet, as it seems to us, very inaccurately represented, by Butler. It consists, in his view, of a uniform postponement of all sorts of natural good to one and the same moral good; and in the comparison from which we make our election, one of the terms is constant and invariable,—virtue rather than appetite, virtue rather than resentment, virtue rather than affection. . . .

“The single additional end of conscience constitutes moral good, which has a natural right of supremacy over the other. The controversy, therefore, of a tempted life, consists in the struggle of natural good against the rightful superiority of moral; and the subordination of a well-regulated life, in the level subjection of the entire class of particular desires to the authority set over them.

“Now, for our own part, after the most diligent search, we cannot find within us this autocratic faculty, having its own private and paramount end. . . .

“Between virtue and a good dinner, or virtue and a full purse, we never experienced a rivalry; and, were such a controversy and Hercules-choice to be proposed, we much fear, looking to the phantom-like character of the other disputant, that the dinner and the purse would win the day. But we remember a boy who once went on a day's excursion among the lakes and hills, provided with an excellent luncheon calculated for a mountain appetite. He had gone an hour or two beyond his reasonable time, and just unpacked his store beside a stream, when a little girl approached,

half-leading, half-dragging, an old man evidently collapsing from exhaustion. They had attempted a short cut over the ridge the day before, lost their way, and spent the night and noon without food or shelter on the hills. The boy divided the contents of his basket between them; the 'particular passion,' pity, getting the better of the 'particular appetite,' hunger, and making itself felt, as having the higher claim. . . .

"And it is the irresistible sense we have, in this case, of its superiority, that is properly denoted by the word *conscience*; the *knowledge with ourselves*, not only of the fact, but of the quality of our inward springs of action. To state the matter in a more general way, we think, that, in common with the inferior animals, we are created with certain determinate propensities to particular ends, or with provisions for the development of such propensities; that, in the lower animals, these operate singly and successively, each taking its turn for the command and guidance of the creature, and none of them becoming objects of reflection; that in us also this instinctive impulse is the original type of activity, and would become permanent in a solitary human being, or in a mind with only one propensity at a time; but that, with us, the same occasion calls up simultaneously two or more springs of action; that, immediately on their juxtaposition, we intuitively discern the higher quality of one than another, giving it a divine and authoritative right of preference; that, when the whole series of springs of action has been experienced, the feeling or 'knowledge with ourselves' of their relative rank constitutes the individual conscience; that all human beings, when their consciousness is faithfully interpreted, as infallibly arrive at the same series of moral estimates as at the same set of rational truths; that it is no less correct, therefore, to speak of a universal conscience than of a universal reason in mankind; and that on this community of nature alone rests the possibility of ethical science."

CHAPTER XI.

THE EXTERNAL ACTIONS: THEIR MORAL QUALITY AND RELATIONS.

§ 70. Thus far we have considered the internal, — i.e., the psychological, — pre-eminently the voluntary activities of man, as the objects-matter of the moral judgments and feelings. We have limited ourselves to the functions of the intellect in discerning those moral relations — and those only — which are involved in the voluntary or spiritual activities of man. We have discovered that the intellect, by its self-conscious power and activities, finds the norm or standard of its judgments in man's internal constitution or capacities; i.e., in the comparative worth or good which the several impulses or affections may yield when interpreted as revealing the end of his activities, and the ideal of his perfection. We have discovered, further, that man, as rational, must propose and prescribe to himself the use of the best natural activities as the norm or law for his voluntary choices. Morality is consequently founded on reason; but it is upon the reason as it concerns itself with the relations of the voluntary activities to one another, and the possibilities of human nature. We have discovered, further, that the enforcement of this law is necessarily followed by the special ethical emotions, giving the experiences of self-approbation, obligation, merit, with their opposites.

The problem and the solution have thus far been comparatively simple. The data are within the reach of every one who reflects. Their import and relations are easily understood, and our judgments of them are immediate and unerring. The decisions being axiomatic and positive, the consequent emotions are uniform and constant.

But morality does not concern itself with the intentions alone. It gives law to the actions also, passing judgment upon the doings as truly as upon the affections and purposes. It requires that the man should act and speak rightly, as truly as that he should purpose and feel and choose rightly. In the order of education, indeed, and in the experiences of common life, it often seems as though morality confined itself to what a man does and says, and concerned itself with nothing behind or beyond; but a more penetrating insight reveals the fact that its soul and life are altogether in the feelings and purposes.

**Morality
cannot be
limited to the
intentions.**

As we look again, we find, also, that while it is true that in one sense the intentions or purposes are of supreme consequence in morals, so far at least as the personal responsibility and the personal well-being of the individual are concerned, yet in another sense the actions are equally important, so far as their interpretation by others and their effect upon others are concerned. We also find it to be true in fact, that rules for the actions have been formed and enforced as a necessary and universal condition of human welfare, and as the natural outgrowth of the moral judgments. That men often stop short with the actions, and are content with limiting their rules to these only, proves that rules for the behavior and conduct are natural and necessary, but not at all that these are the chief objects of the moral judgments or feelings, or that the latter are limited to the manners or words or deeds.

**The actions
also impor-
tant.**

§ 71. We mean by the actions all corporal activities whatever, from a hateful look to a murderous blow, which give out-

ward manifestation or expression or effect to the purposes or feelings. These actions are of consequence for the following reasons: *They execute the purposes, they manifest or express them, they strengthen them, they make them habitual and spontaneous.*

(1) External actions give effect to, and thus complete, the purposes. Every purpose is, in its own nature, a purpose to act. Whenever a man chooses, intends, or purposes, he chooses some object. But he cannot choose an object unless he formally or impliedly gives supremacy to an impulse which tends to issue in action. In popular language, he chooses all those effects which are the natural and necessary consequences of his choice. Inasmuch as intentions impel to deeds, he cannot exercise the intentions without performing the deeds which are intended, unless hindered by some superior or stronger force. If he actually chooses that his neighbor shall enjoy some good, he chooses, if he can, to do what will make him happy in some definite form. If he really wishes, in the sense of willing, "Be ye warmed or be ye clothed," and does nothing for the warmth or clothing of another when he is able, he does not morally will that he be warmed or clothed. If a man wills his own well-being, in general or special, by the supreme purpose or impulse of his nature, he will also do whatever he can which may promote that well-being. We say, whatever is in his power in either case. We do not assert for men the power, i.e., the external instrumentality, to accomplish all on which their hearts are bent or set; but we do assert, that whenever it is in the power of a man to do any thing in the direction of his intentions or controlling purposes, he cannot really wish or will unless he also acts in obedience to his will. While, then, it is true that the moral relations belong primarily to the intentions, it is equally true that they also *extend to and enforce the actions which are the necessary complement of those intentions.*

(2) The external actions manifest or make known the feelings and purposes, as truly as they obey and execute them.¹ Man is not only impelled, i.e., morally obliged, to complete his purposes, but he is impelled to make them known from irrepressible impulses, as also for the incitement of his fellow-men to imitate them. It is, of course, presumed that the outward acts are morally right. But every manifested purpose, if morally good, inspires others to follow it. By the same rule, every wrong intention is fitted to deter others from imitation, by its manifested moral unworthiness. It becomes a duty with every man, for this reason if for no other, to abstain from evil words and deeds, however lightly in the cases supposed he may be likely to be moved by this additional consideration.

(2) They
manifest
them.

(3) To execute or even to speak the intention, makes it more energetic. Whether we can explain the fact, or not, the fact cannot be questioned, that a right

(3) Make
them more
energetic.

¹ Man, as we know him, is not spirit only, but he is also body; and the human body is more than flesh and bones, nerve and tissue. Human flesh and tissue are capable of expressing feeling and design by the natural language of gesture and tone and facial expression. How far this symbolism is the product of imitation, or intensified by sympathy, or taught by authority, we need not inquire. It is enough if we accept the truth, that something of word and look and gesture and movement is used, by a natural impulse, to express the feelings, and is interpreted by natural insight to signify them. All philosophy implies or teaches this, — the materialistic pre-eminently, with its propagated tendencies affecting and uniting impulse and word, emotion and act.

The recognition of this law does not exclude imitation and culture, or positive enactments of law and custom: it rather finds a place for them. But it explains natural morals by their original elements. It enforces the necessity of expressing the feelings by gesture and act, the possibility of interpreting both, and the duty of acting in certain ways, all of which control and animate natural ethics. It explains the fact that natural manners or modes of action and speech become positive morals, by a sense of what is fit and becoming in speech and look and movement; how sympathy enforces particular duties of outward act; and how even convention, fashion, and arbitrary enactments, impose the ethical obligation to conform to what are the current or accepted ways of doing or speaking.

purpose, when spoken by a word or acted in a deed, or even manifested by a look, becomes more active and energetic. Such is the complex nature of man, and such are the conditions of his development as a psycho-physiological being, that bodily manifestation gives strength and permanence to every impulse. Hence the obligation to speak or act our intentions becomes synonymous with the obligation to make them as energetic as possible, it being always presumed that they are morally right. For, if they are wrong, the obligation not to act or speak them follows from the duty not to intend or will wrongly.

(4) The acting-out of the intentions also strengthens them into habits, both internal and external, whether
 (4) Confirm them into habits. intellectual, emotional, or expressional. The man who follows every purpose with a deed, thereby trains his passive capacities to such methods of service and aid as can be readily repeated. He brings the associative power to the side of duty, and holds himself to its service by the ready response and co-operation of all the powers of his complex nature, as body and spirit, as intellect, sensibility, and will. He trains his active energies and passive susceptibilities to act in harmony with one another under the controlling purposes which the conscience approves. For all these reasons, the deed can never be regarded as either indifferent or superfluous, but as the natural and necessary, and morally obligatory, manifestation and completion of the inward purpose. The familiar words are no less practically important than they are philosophically profound: “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect.*”

§ 72. It follows, that whenever an external action, a look or word or deed, stands in any of the relations named to a purpose or intention, the intellect imposes a law for this action as truly as for the purpose. So far as any one of these relations is constant and necessary, such a law is fixed and absolute. So far as it is variable and uncertain, the law is occasional, and admits of exceptions.

Rules for the feelings include rules for the actions.

Whenever an action is invariably necessary to execute, to manifest, or to confirm the right intention, the law is imperative that the given action must invariably be performed, or, as the case may be, be avoided. Every action which is evidently and without exception fitted to promote my own well-being or that of my fellow-man is known to be invariably right; i.e., it is known to be an action which I always ought to perform. We neither ask nor answer the question whether the number of such actions be great or small; we do not inquire whether it is by natural or supernatural revelation that any actions are declared to hold this relation: we only assert, that if, upon any evidence, this is known to be true of any class of actions, those actions are uniformly and unchangeably right, and their opposites are as uniformly wrong, simply on the ground that we ought to intend or purpose our own well-being and that of our fellow-men, and, impliedly, the honor of God. It follows, that whatever actions invariably promote these ends should invariably be performed. The rule in respect to such words and actions is absolute and unqualified: *Thou shalt*, or *Thou shalt not*. We may safely assume that the classes of actions are few which respect our fellow-men or ourselves, the import and effect of which are so clear, that all men accept them as universally obligatory. But, whether they be few or many, the mind affirms, of all of them, positive axioms or principles of outward conduct.

Certain
actions are
invariably
right.

Of the great majority of external actions, it must be said, that while, in the majority of cases, their effect and import are so obvious that no man can question that they are right or wrong; yet now and then circumstances will occur which will not only justify, but require, a deviation from the ordinary rule. Thus, in ordinary cases, no man can take the liberty, the life, or the property of another. This rule, it is well known, has been interpreted to mean that human life, liberty, and property are uniformly to be held sacred, and so sacred that neither the individual nor

Many actions
are obliga-
tory only in
the majority
of cases.

the state may interfere with either under any supposable circumstances. The experiences of stern necessity ordinarily teach men to judge more wisely in practice, and drive them to limit such universal axioms by manifold and manifest exceptions, such as compel attention and enforce compliance. The state takes life as a penalty for crime, not only by right, but of duty. It exposes (i.e., sacrifices) life, by compelling the drafted soldier to march to the picket-line, and die. It shoots down the innocent with the guilty in quelling a street-riot. It takes the property of an individual under extreme necessity, and the individual does the same. It subjects the innocent to temporary or permanent disabilities, in respect to liberty or other rights, under extreme conditions of public or state necessity. The cases are not unfrequent in which an individual or the community, for reasons that justify the act in the eyes of all candid men, transgresses the ordinary rules which guard life, liberty, and property. Even the civil law, which concerns itself with the grosser violations of the few ordinary moral laws which it attempts to enforce, rarely proceeds to punish any external action, unless it assumes, or impliedly proves, that the act was performed with felonious intent or malice aforethought.

All these exceptional cases not only justify, but require, possible exceptions to the ordinary rules which relate to external action. Hence the law to do or not to do a particular thing is always so interpreted as to admit this or that qualified exception, whether or not this exception is expressed.

§ 73. Another important fact deserves to be considered ; viz.,

Moral significance of actions varies with manners.

that external actions, in many cases, vary in their significance with the manners or etiquette which prevail in a community. We need not inquire as to

how these manners came to be accepted, — whether from physical, or personal, or conventional reasons. It is enough that we know that every community finds itself in possession of certain modes or ways of speaking and acting,

which manifest, execute, or confirm the feelings or purposes. From manners, — i.e., ways of speaking and acting, — the terms “morals” and “ethics” are derived; and with conformity to manners, and the regulation of manners, they very largely concern themselves. Just as soon and just as far as the intentions become the subject of moral judgment and enforcement, just so soon do the actions which are understood in the community to be their appropriate manifestations pass under the control and adjudication of the moral reason.

The accepted manners or etiquette are by no means the same in all communities; e.g., the modes of expressing love and hate, esteem and disrespect, the conditions of conveying property or securing rights. But, what-
Modes or
manners
vary.
 ever these may be, if established and accepted they are invested with the sacredness and authority which belong to the feelings of kindness, courtesy, truth, patriotism, affection, and gratitude which they are supposed to express. It follows of necessity, and it should occasion no surprise, that an action which is wholly indifferent in one community may be of the highest moral significance in another. Again, an action or word or look which in one community is rigidly enforced by the highest moral authority, — an act which even involves the issues of life and death, — in another community may have no moral significance whatever. Some nations are so fierce and minute in their enforcement of trivial and stupid etiquette, as to obscure and crush out the ethical import of many of the actions which they prescribe. Others are so careless and indefinite in respect to both manners and actions, as to blunt the public sensibility to moral distinctions, by their indifference to external conduct. The morality of the Chinese is very largely a matter of etiquette, which sacrifices the real well-being of the individual
Morality of
the Chinese.
 and the community to petrified and meaningless rules, to the observance of which the entire force of domestic education, of unchanging fashion, of legal observances, of organized law and a half-pantheistic religion, are committed

with a resistless energy that seems as mysterious as it is omnipotent. But whether the connection between the purposes and the actions is natural or conventional, some connection must be assumed to be more or less uniform and fixed, as the ground of affirming any code for the words, the deeds, or the manners.

§ 74. The cases already supposed are cases in which the connection is uniform, or which admit of infrequent exceptions. But there are large classes of actions in which such a connection is by no means established. Although, in the majority of instances, the right intention would require a certain external action, the exceptions are more or less frequent. Thus, benevolence to my fellow-man in extreme distress would very frequently require me to interfere actively for his relief, while cases might occur in which to extend this relief would be morally wrong. If one of my own family were in immediate danger of death or of serious evil, it might be my duty to withhold from my nearest neighbor those offices of courtesy or assistance which would otherwise be obligatory and spontaneously proffered. In respect to all acts of this description, rules for action are adopted with the general understanding that they are to be obeyed under the ordinary conditions of social existence, while in those which are extraordinary, whether they are more or less frequent, the exceptions will justify themselves. In the motley experiences of social life, and the unexpected conjunctions of human events, men occasionally are surprised to find themselves morally obliged to do and avoid actions which in the ordinary course of human events would contradict all their preconceived principles, and shock their most sacred and confirmed associations. Moral surprises of this sort are among the most dramatic of human experiences.

There are other classes of actions which are obligatory more frequently than otherwise, — maxims of practical wisdom or prudence, which are both useful as guides for the conduct and important as directors to the conscience. Such

Sometimes
exceptions
are frequent.

Maxims of
prudence.

rules, in every case in which they are applicable, are as sacred and as binding as the rules which admit of no exceptions at all. The fact that they are not uniformly binding, or that the exceptions to them are numerous, does not weaken their authority in the least in those cases in which they are known to apply.

Again, there are classes of duties which are binding on a single individual and for a limited period of time, be it longer or shorter, — duties both to one's self and fellow-men, which are founded on special circumstances and temporary relations. It should ever be remembered, however, that these duties are as supreme and sacred in their authority, so long as the reasons for their continuance remain, as are the codes which are universal and eternal.

Each individual man also must of necessity form his own private code of rules, which is far more minute than any moral teacher would venture to prescribe or enforce, respecting the employment of his time, the regulation of his diet, of his manners and his modes of speech, indeed, in respect to the most of his individual habits of action. This code may not be expressed in language, it may change with changing circumstances; and yet, so long as the reasons for it exist, so long it has complete moral authority.

Private and individual codes.

§ 75. It may be objected to this view of special rules for the external actions, that it subjects the determination of all rules of conduct (with their exceptions) to the independent judgment of each individual man, and consequently degrades the moral code, which ought to be the master of the man, to be the servant of his caprice or his ignorance. This objection applies equally to the doctrine of private judgment as related to the authority and independence of truth. The fact that truth is one and supreme cannot conflict with the principle that each man's individual judgment of truth must be final and sacred for himself. Even if all the formal or expressed rules for conduct were the same in every case and for every individual, and admitted no exception, each man's judg-

Objection stated and answered.

ment must decide how far they apply to the changing aspects of his individual life and to his own special relations to his fellow-men. In judging of the application of rules, the opportunity for bias and mistake is almost equal to that which attends the determination of the rule. In respect to neither can we ever be delivered from the liability to error in our individual judgments.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that important advantages attend this double liability to mistake and error. What is called the changeableness of moral codes, and their flexibility, are no grounds of objection, but rather confirmations of their excellence. So far from weakening the authority and threatening the permanency of the moral law, they strengthen its sacredness, and establish its continuance by providing for its usefulness. The intellect is thereby subjected to a constant moral training, from which is derived a constant moral discipline. Every man is thereby made responsible not only for what he does, but for what he judges that he ought to do; and the duties of teachableness, honesty, and candor in the use of the intellect, are constantly brought into requisition. It is fashionable, in view of the necessary and natural limitations of the human understanding, to limit the responsibilities of men almost entirely to what they do and feel, to the exclusion of their judgments and opinions respecting duty. A closer and more accurate view of man's individual and social relations would justify the

opposite conclusion; viz., that men are very largely responsible, not only for what they do and intend, but also for what they believe and conclude (cf. § 75). This conclusion is justified not only by the logic which compels us to refer the conduct and feelings of men to their judgments, but by the observation of facts, which finds everywhere abundant evidence that men shape their rules of conduct, to a large extent, by the moulding influence of their passions and desires. What men are in char-

Important advantages from this arrangement.

Men responsible for their judgments as truly as for their conduct.

acter, is determined very largely by what they accept as rules of duty. More than this is true. Not only are the opinions and prejudices of men in respect to ethical questions powerfully affected by their character, but their purposes and passions re-act indirectly but powerfully upon their intellectual habits and opinions.

§ 76. These observations, however, apply to those rules of external conduct which admit of more or fewer exceptions. The commanding duties of life, in the ordinary occasions and circumstances of man, cannot possibly be uncertain, as the duties of truth, temperance, justice, and humanity, neither in their import, their authority, nor their ordinary applications to the outward conduct. The well-being of the individual and of society enforces certain external actions too clearly and too emphatically to make it possible for men to look each other in the face and not to recognize these duties as invariably binding.

The commanding duties of life admit of rare exceptions.

“The primal duties shine aloft like stars.”

The duties of temperance and purity and truth and courtesy and justice, of honesty and uprightness, are acknowledged and enforced by the reflecting judgments of all honest and earnest men. Even when men habitually and persistently offend against these rules, they dare not deny their value and authority. Their self-respect and inner sense of truth require them to honor and enforce the very laws which condemn them. Even when they palliate their defective conduct or their deliberate transgressions, by the force of passion or the strength of temptation, they cling to the law and their faith in it, and respect for it, as most sacred and valuable. It is true, they not infrequently refuse to recognize their individual offences as properly coming under the rule which they honor. They devise every variety of euphemistic phraseology to avoid applying the harsher epithets which express the sharp judgments and the indignant emotions

of the honest rule when honestly applied. It is only when a man sets himself in defiance to and against all truth and consistency of thinking, that he denies or disputes the truth of the great rules of outward conduct that elevate man above what is lower than the brute in sensual passion, and more cruel than the brute in violence and hate.

§ 77. It is more than possible, it is probable, that the objection might occur to some, that the principles we have propounded in respect to the relation of the inner purpose to the outward expression or act is the same as the doctrine familiarly known as “The end justifies the means.” This doctrine has been applied to sanction almost every variety of crime, under the pretext that the action in question — whether murder, theft, violence, treachery, or falsehood — was, under special circumstances, the best or the necessary means of fulfilling the best intentions, whether of patriotism, religion, or social or individual welfare. We meet this objection by observing, that, in respect to those classes of external actions which are accepted as of universal obligation, it is so manifest that the virtues in question are the only external actions which the right or good intention can possibly require or even admit, that no honest man would question that the external act is uniformly binding. This is manifest from examples of what seem at first to be exceptions to the ordinary rules. These exceptions, as we say, justify themselves. They even enforce the rule, by calling attention to the reason for it which the exception recognizes in pleading it as an excuse. Thus homicide is not always murder; violence to the person, in order to save from death, is not a criminal assault; the breaking into a burning house in order to arouse the sleeping inmates is not burglary, either in law or morals: for the single reason that in these cases the external action is seen to be exceptional to its ordinary import and effect; and hence, in such cases, the end *does* justify the means. In every such case, it is literally true, *Exceptio probat regulam*; that is, the reason for the

deviation is the reason for implicit obedience whenever the circumstances do not justify an exception *clamante voce*.

§ 78. It may be urged as an objection, that our theory involves the necessity of *calculating the consequences*¹ of every single action, the power to do which, in every special case, would be utterly beyond the reach of any man, and the necessity of exercising the power would render all rules useless. It is enough to reply, that, in respect to the great rules of common morality, there is no need of calculating their consequences, because these are discerned and admitted by all men as rapidly as they are made acquainted with them. The universal tendency or import and operation of the act are discerned with an insight which for quickness and positiveness is equivalent to an intuition. The same is true of the assent to those rules which are very general, though not strictly universal. It is only when the consequences compel attention that they need to be calculated or considered, — when they compel it with such energy as to justify the exceptions, as, in the cases already supposed, of justifiable homicide or violence.

The calculation of consequences.

In the case of those rules which admit frequent exceptions, the consequences must be considered whenever a deviation from the rule is allowed.

We may not overlook the fact, in this connection, that education and tradition, manners and religion, have much to do with the determination of questions of external conduct; and it is neither possible nor desirable that any human being should separate himself from the past which he inherits, or the present by which he is surrounded, in determining the moral authority of the rules of his external life. Every man finds himself, from his infancy to his death, more or less in a state of pupilage and dependence, with respect to his fellow-men, in deciding questions of

Every person more or less influenced by the community.

¹ Cf. Dr. T. DWIGHT's *Theology*, sermon xcix.

duty. It is only partially at the completest, and gradually at the latest, that any individual attains that measure of indifference to others which he can never completely assert. Man is born and dies in the family, the church, and the state. He must begin his moral life by recognizing the teachings and authority of each, although it is both his right and his duty to revise and to dissent more or less from each in regulating his life as he becomes more and more self-relying.

The maxim, "The end justifies the means," as ordinarily applied, supposes two external actions or events instead of one, of which one is the end, and the other is the mean. For example: the taking of life, and breach of faith, we may suppose are the means; the removal of a tyrant, and the recovery of lost rights, are the ends: both being conceded to be desirable ends and valuable blessings, not only to an individual, but to the community. In view of these ends, an act, say *tyrannicide*, which would otherwise be criminal, is, as is alleged, justified as the necessary and therefore the lawful means of the greatest good.

The principle for which we have contended, as necessary to the moral determination of the external conduct, contemplates but *one action*, which is supposed to be the uniform, or at least the usually recognized, method of manifesting or executing the intention or purpose, and for this reason is taken as uniformly obligatory. The voluntary purpose is not properly considered as the means at all, to the external action. Ethically it is complete in itself. It is all that the moral law directly requires. Its being acted and expressed in action is, so to speak, an incident of its existence, — an incident which is certain, necessary, and morally obligatory indeed, but not related to it as the end is to a means; i.e., as one external phenomena or event is an end to another as its means, with an intention or purpose behind both.

As the terms of the relations vary in the two cases, it is not surprising that the same should be true of the relations them-

selves. In the one case, the aim or intention is supposed to be fixed. In the other case, the ends are supposed to be diverse. In the one case, the only varying element is the fitness of an action to promote a single and fixed purpose. In many cases, this fitness is assumed to be incapable of change; while, in many other cases, it changes rarely. In the other case, it is denied that there is any fixed relation between action and intention in the effect or operation of external actions; or, at least, that any are fixed in the interest of moral obligation. Hence it is inferred that man is at liberty to assume for himself to judge of the consequences of any one of his own actions, to the exclusion of the indications which he finds in the established order of the universe and the purposes of its Author. The doctrine is at once irrational and atheistic in its theory, and licentious and demoralizing in its practical influence.

Difference between a change in the terms related, and a change in the relations.

§ 79. Akin to this doctrine is the casuistic expedient for a very lax morality in conduct, which has been more or less notorious under the title of “the direction of the intention.”¹ The doctrine is briefly as follows: Let it be conceded that whatever a man does is good or bad, according to his intention. Let him now perform any act whatever, and have a good end in view: the moral excellence of his good intention will give moral quality to the act, no matter what the character or effect of that act may be. He may murder or steal or lie; but, if he designs thereby the good of men or the glory of God, he is morally approved in accordance with what he designs, and with that only. We may safely accept the principle, that what a man purposes or designs determines the moral quality of the agent; but we should deny that a man can design any thing which is good, and yet refrain from a certain action, much less that he could possibly do that which he knows or might know would defeat that very

Direction of the intention.

¹ See the instructive chapter in P. JANET, *La Morale*, Paris; translated as *The Theory of Morals*, New York, 1883.

good on which, as is contended, his heart may be set. In every case he is shut up to the necessity, both logical and moral, of performing a specific action, — either that one which he certainly knows that a morally right intention uniformly requires, or the act which he confidently believes is demanded under present circumstances. No direction of the intention to any other aim than that which the man actually achieves, no attempt to animate a bad deed with the soul of benevolence or saintly devotion, can relieve the conscience of the perpetrator from the sense of personal responsibility, or that of his adviser from complicity with his guilt.

To interpret the principle that the intention is the all-important element in morality, so as to justify the doctrine that a good intention justifies any means for its realization, and therefore that the external conduct is a matter of indifference, is to insult the common judgment of mankind in respect to the significance of manners and of conduct. It is to do worse: it is to weaken the faith of men in the moral order of the universe as controlling all external and physical events in the interest of the moral law.

The discussion of the topic is useful, however, so far as it serves to bring into bold relief the truth that it is impossible to construct any theory of ethics unless we recognize the presence of design in the universe; and also the truth, that design not only controls the relations of man to himself in the inner workings of his being, but also provides for the harmony of the regard for self, in the best sense of the term, with love to our fellow-men, and even controls the physical relations of man as an individual and man in society. Even the intuitional theory, whether of Price or Kant, can only solve certain ethical questions by resorting to the intuition of design. But whenever this theory ekes out its necessities by help from its neighbor, it exposes itself at once to the inquiry, which intuition is, after all, the fundamental intuition, — the category of intuitional rectitude, or the category of assumed design.

§ 80. The resolution of moral excellence into right or virtuous intention, *when acted out*, has been considered justly as the noblest feature of the Christian ethics as compared with every other system, in its speculative thoroughness and its practical value. The value of this single principle in solving the problems of speculative morality, and again in meeting the difficulties of practical ethics, becomes more and more conspicuous the more the student familiarizes himself with the failure, even of Christian theologians (to say nothing of anti-Christian theologians), to appreciate and apply this principle, which is at once as wide-reaching as it is easily understood and readily explained.

The noblest
feature of
Christian
ethics.

Its practical value is equally conspicuous, the instant that we acquaint ourselves with the many perplexed questions of practical morals which vex the souls of conscientious men. It is one of the many examples of the irony of history, that this principle, at once so spiritual, so profound, and so practical, should have been perverted by casuists into one of the most degrading and demoralizing maxims of individual conduct and social life, under the title of "the direction of the intention." It strikingly exemplifies the adage, *Corruptio optimi pessima*.

§ 81. The manifestation of right intentions by speech, gesture, and action also admits of æsthetic quality, or the quality of *beauty*, in ethical character and conduct. As these manifestations please or displease the taste, actions are said to be morally beautiful or ugly. Moral beauty and deformity are, indeed, sometimes applied to the internal affections as such, i.e., to the voluntary feelings and dispositions. Inasmuch as moral excellence introduces order and symmetry and consistency into the inner activities, it is natural to conceive of it as an example of spiritual beauty, and to apply to virtue and vice the conceptions which are appropriate to beauty and deformity. The intrinsic beauty of virtue and virtuous emotions and purposes, and the essential deformity of vice and vicious feelings,

Æsthetic
quality in
ethics.

Moral beauty
in feeling
and in act.

have been freely emphasized by moralists in all ages, from Plato down to Ruskin. By such writers, virtue has been conceived of and represented as resulting from the harmonious working of the spiritual powers, analogous to dignity and elegance of feature, form, or action, to graceful and facile movements of the person in the dance, to the harmonious blending of sounds in music, or to the easy transitions and contrasts of colors. These analogies have led many moralists to treat the moral sensibility as kindred to, if not a form of, æsthetic feeling. The advocates of the moral sense, as Malebranche, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume, and Herbart, very naturally accept this view, more or less formally, or use language which favors or implies it.

The adherents of this view in this most positive form will be the foremost to acknowledge that the manifestations of virtue and vice admit the relations of beauty and grace, or their opposites; and that these are founded on the fitness or suitableness of words or deeds to the emotions and purposes which they purport to express or to serve. We may conceive the purest benevolence, the sweetest affection, the tenderest sympathy, and the most heroic fortitude, through some defect of bodily organization, or absence of culture, to express themselves in tones and gestures and words and actions which awaken emotions that are altogether the opposite of those which the feelings and purposes would appropriately occasion. There is a broad and deep chasm, in all such cases, between the spiritual emotions and character and their sensuous manifestations. Virtue or moral goodness, in all such cases, wears the garb of its opposite.

Conversely, vicious and selfish emotions and character may drape themselves in manners that are literally "the livery of heaven, to serve the Devil in;" may employ words that naturally express the purest love, and acts that in their seeming could only be dictated by saintly unselfishness. Whether "vice itself loses half

The beauty of virtue, how conceived and described.

Appropriate garb of virtue.

Virtue often misrepresented.

Vice connected with grace and beauty of manners.

its evil by losing all its grossness," is a question on which many differ. Some will contend, that, because cultured "hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue," therefore it is no better than brutal sensuality and fiendish selfishness; while others will hold as earnestly, and even passionately, that the sentiment just cited is not only superficial but demoralizing in its underlying principle. All men, however, will confess that grace and beauty of speech and gesture and act are the fitting garb for true inward excellence, and that the cultivation of these æsthetic attractions is an obligation as real as the obligation to possess the soul of true virtue in right intentions and a virtuous will. The neglect to manifest our virtuous purposes by fitting acts, the careless or contemptuous disesteem of attractive manners, of gracious words and gentle ways, which are not only practised, but justified, by men and even women who would pass for eminent philanthropists or super-eminent saints, have done more to bring saintliness and philanthropy into discredit than the open defiance of moral restraints or the wilful profession of irreverence and unbelief. Christianity has the rare and peculiar merit of reconciling, in the most natural way, the sternest severity of self-control with the attractive grace of the gentlest manners. While in theory it counts the outward man as little or nothing in comparison with the inner man of the heart, it tends to spiritualize the outward man by the silent operation of the charity that "doth not behave itself unseemly." Its command in respect to the outer actions is constant and uncompromising: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things.*"

CHAPTER XII.

DIVERSITY OF ETHICAL DEFINITIONS AND THEORIES.

§ 82. It would seem at first as though no concepts ought to be so easily defined as ethical concepts. If, as we have contended, the most important ethical relations are so clearly discerned by all mankind who are willing to see them, and the feelings which they excite are acknowledged to be so controlling, it would be naturally inferred, that no conceptions could be so easily explained as ethical conceptions, and that in respect to none would the theories of man be so united and so positive. The want of clearness which prevails in respect to these conceptions, and the diversity of ethical definitions and theories, seem to require some special explanation. We have already emphasized an important difference between the reality of a fact or truth, and the scientific definition or theory which explains or enforces it. The explanation which we have given of the processes by which these concepts are reached, and the various senses in which they are used, may have prepared us to understand more fully why the principal ethical terms are differently defined and explained by different men, and by the same men at different times.

We notice first, that the terms “right” and “wrong” admit wider or narrower definitions, according as they are made to cover a wider or narrower field of relations. This is not peculiar to these terms, or the objects for which they stand. The full content of any concept would cover

The acknowl-
edged diver-
sity of defi-
nitions and
theories.

Applied to a
wider or nar-
rower field.

the relations of the object to which it pertains, to every other object to which these relations are at all significant. The breadth of the definitions which we give to any must depend upon the number of objects with which it is compared. It follows that one of very many definitions of the same object may be less complete than the others, without being exclusive or contradictory of them. One definition may seem to be inconsistent or unrelated with another, for the simple yet sufficient reason, that in words or in thought they do not cover the same field, or for the reason that what is affirmed in one is implied in the other.

In the definition or analysis which we have given of right and wrong, we began with man as supposed to exist alone, and to hold relations only to himself; excluding, for the time being, any relations to his fellow-men. We began with this conception of man as furnishing an ethical nucleus or germ, — viz., those relations which a single human being holds to himself; which germ might grow and expand by natural accretion from the additional material of new relationships as new points of comparison should present themselves. We contended, moreover, that, if an individual could be conceived of as existing alone, he would find himself discerning the more important relations, and experiencing the conspicuous emotions, which all men call moral. Man existing alone is a microcosm, a spiritual organism, capable of voluntary activities, which are impelled by varied desires, all tending to good. In the words of Butler, he has an “inward frame,” “considered as a *system or constitution* whose several parts are united, not by a physical principle of individuation, but by the respects they have to each other, the chief of which is the subjection which the appetites, passions, and particular affections have to the one supreme principle of reflection or conscience.” As such a being, he must judge and test them by the standard furnished in the best capacities of his nature as known by himself. The estimate which he forms

Right and wrong may be limited to a solitary individual.

of himself, when tried by this standard, he must follow by self-approval or disapproval. It is obvious that right and wrong action, generalized and defined by these relations, must be conceived as the voluntary choice of the highest good known to man, followed by self-satisfaction or its opposite.

This highest subjective good would no sooner be recognized as possible and desirable, than it would be imposed by man upon himself as a law for his future respect or obedience, and enforced by the prospect of the rewards or penalty of his self-approval or self-reproach. In view of this added relation, right and wrong are still further defined as activities which involve the feeling of obligation. Moreover, they are directly or categorically commanded and prohibited, the processes by which they are imposed being so simple and natural. So soon as man's highest subjective good comes into view, the added relation of adaptation or design and its content will contribute a new element, and the definition will be so far enlarged. Viewed under this new relation, the inner law has new meaning, and is enforced by additional sanctions of obligation. But, in adding these new relations, we neither deny nor exclude any of the preceding. One rises into the other by a natural accretion and growth.

§ 83. If now other beings than man himself are brought into the field, and if his own highest good is either assumed or known to involve their highest good, then right action, so far as our fellows are concerned, is still further conceived and defined as the voluntary action which tends to *the common good*. This may be deduced *a priori* by inference from the assumption that nature would provide for the harmony of the two, or it may be inferred from the conscious experience of the superior quality of benevolent affection itself, or it may be derived from both. But the addition of this new element in no way excludes those already recognized in our definition.

If this activity is again inferred to be willed by the Supreme Reason or the Supreme Ruler, the conception of right action is enlarged and exalted by its relation to the authority or will of God. It is still further defined as the manifested law of God, who is assumed to be perfect reason and perfect goodness.

When the Supreme is considered.

We repeat the remark already made, that none of these relations, as they succeed each other by natural development, necessarily exclude one another. They simply enlarge the content or import of the concepts in question, as one after another is recognized as true, and consequently moves the feelings and impels the will. This enlargement of import is the result (as we say popularly) of regarding the subject-matter under new lights or from new points of view. Many of the theories of morals which have been taught in the schools, when compared in their elements or traced in their history, will be found in no sense to be inconsistent one with another. More frequently each separate theory rests on some single relation, which rather presupposes and implies the others, than excludes and repels them. Indeed, what we might expect we find to be true, that each of the theories of morals which has had its abundant following and its earnest watchword represents a single relation, which is by no means exclusive of those of other schools. We also find that each and all together must take its place in any complete and well-rounded theory, if it would recognize all the facts and relations which the truth embodies.

These groups of relations do not exclude one another.

The careful student of the various speculative theories of morals which have found so many assailants and defenders will not be surprised to find that each represents one or more of the elements which go to make up the concepts of moral good and evil when ideally completed. Each one of these theories ordinarily represents but one side or aspect of the truth. That only is the true theory which provides for them all. Such a view must of

Different theories represent more or fewer relations.

necessity exclude the dogma that the relation is simple and undefinable, inasmuch as a concept that is simple must be incapable of analysis or growth. It would seem, that, as our concepts in any domain of thought ascend in dignity and importance, so the more complicated do they become in their internal structure, and the more rich in their spiritual content.

The saying of Kant, that “nothing can possibly be conceived in this world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a good will,” is often cited as sanctioning the position that the concept good-will, or moral goodness, is incapable of analysis or definition, or, in other words, is a simple idea. It would seem to be sufficient, in reply, to call attention to the fact, that the concept which answers to any complex term cannot itself be simple: moreover, the concept good-will denotes a conspicuous property, or attainment, of a being with a highly complex nature. Such a being, it would seem, by the fact that he occupies a higher position in the scale of existence, is none the less, but the more, capable of answering to a very complex conception, such as must be recognized at once when the term “a good will” is defined.

§ 84. Not only do the definitions of the moral concepts differ,

Right and
wrong ap-
plied to dif-
ferent sub-
jects-matter.

according as they include more or fewer significant relations; but the terms which designate them are applied to diverse subjects-matter. This variety of application, however, involves neither inconsistency

nor contradiction of thought.

Primarily and properly, and as we may always say impliedly,

Primarily
only to the
voluntary
purposes.

the concepts of right and wrong are affirmed of the *voluntary purposes*, and of these alone. Apart from the voluntary purpose or desire, an action can have no moral quality whatever. We ought also to add,

that in the last analysis, and in the highest sense, right and wrong pertain to the permanent voluntary state which we call *the character*. Right and wrong are also affirmed of the *dispositions and habits*, whether these are affirmed of the natural

tendencies or structure which precede voluntary activity, or of their consequences and effects, or more or less of both. Right and wrong are also affirmed of *particular intentions*, or purposes to perform particular external actions. In courts of law, and in the most of the ethical judgments pronounced by man upon man, they go no farther than such intentions; these being presumed to be deliberate and rational. Right and wrong are also affirmed of *external actions only*, and very frequently with no distinct reference to the intention which the action is supposed to manifest or execute, but always with the assumption that the man performed the action with intelligence in respect to its effect. Right and wrong are also applied to actions that carry no intention with them, and hence have no moral quality: and even with an interchange of meaning, so that *an external action which is morally wrong may be the right action*, i.e., the action suitable to a right purpose; or, one that is right morally, i.e., in its purpose, may yet be the wrong action in outward expression and effect.

§ 85. We distinguish between the act and intention more exactly and effectually, by availing ourselves of the terms *absolute* and *relative rightness*. These terms Absolute and
relative
rightness. may not be the most felicitous, but they serve the purpose for which they are used. *Absolute rightness*, as thus used, is a rightness which is absolute, or perfect, i.e., the most complete conceivable, covering every relation. It is affirmed when the intention is right, and the action, in every respect, is suitable to such right intention. If a man is animated by the most disinterested purpose to benefit his fellow-men, and knows exactly what he should do in order to accomplish this purpose, and actually does all this, his action is completely and consummately right, his activity is absolutely right. *Relative rightness*, on the other hand, is affirmed with respect to the intention only, or to the external action only. If the intention only is right, while the action is more or less unfitted to execute or express this intention, the man and his total activity are right relatively to

the intention only. On the other hand, if a man with a wrong purpose performs an action which would be suitable to a morally perfect intention, his action — i.e., his word or deed — would be relatively right. For example, a man might intend to give another what he supposed would act as a poison, but which proves to be a needed medicine. An action may be relatively right when it is morally wrong ; but it can be absolutely right only when the intention and the act are harmonious, that is, when the intention is right, and the action is also right, — i.e., when it is an appropriate expression or manifestation of the intention : then the action is conformed to the ideal in all conceivable relations.

§ 86. By distinguishing between the intention and the action, we are prepared to determine the question *whether, and in what sense, morality is eternal and immutable*. In answering this question, it is important that we notice, that moral relations suppose and imply the existence of moral beings. There can be no propriety in affirming such relations of any other. It were as absurd to conceive of gravity or light or electricity or chemism without matter, or geometrical relations without space, as to conceive of right and wrong, or moral obligation, in the absence of beings endowed with those natural capacities which qualify them for moral activity. We cannot extend our conceptions of moral relations beyond the range of existing beings ; i.e., persons endowed with capacities for moral judgments and emotions. On the other hand, it were as impossible to conceive of matter, or mathematical entities, without implying the necessity and uniformity of the relations which each involve, as to conceive of moral relations as not permanently and necessarily implied in the existence and activity of moral beings.

The question whether morality is eternal and immutable is interchangeable with the question whether moral beings, one or more, shall continue to exist. Morality must always signify a fixed relationship between the volitions and acts of a moral being and his capacities. We

In what sense
is morality
eternal and
immutable?

They always
suppose
moral beings.

affirm with confidence, that, whenever and wherever a moral person exists, his moral activities must have constant and unalterable relations to these capacities. Whatever be the limitations or the reach of his intellect, or the sensitiveness or intensity of his capacities of feeling, his judgments respecting his voluntary activities must be the same, and also the emotions which are consequent on such judgments. The relations themselves are constant; the subjective judgments of these relations must be similar, so far as reflection is applied to them with honest attention; and the results must be uniform and constant in both thought and feeling.

These supposed relations, however, pertain to the internal economy of the man, i.e., to his intentions and voluntary affections and purposes. It is of these, and of these only, that we confidently assert that all moral beings must pronounce the same judgments. The actions of men, on the other hand, are uniformly right and wrong so far, and so far only, as in all conceivable circumstances they are known to be the appropriate manifestations and effects of right or wrong purposes.

The permanence and fixedness of moral obligation is established so soon as it is affirmed of the inner activities. All that we need say of these actions is, that so far as any classes of actions are uniformly and invariably required by right intentions, so far are the rules of external action fixed and constant, — as fixed and constant as are the requisitions of duty upon the heart.

**Permanent
and fixed
relations of
the inner
activities.**

To concede that the law of duty, in varying circumstances, may require varying external actions, does in no sense weaken the authority or permanence of this law, as it is applied to the inner life. Indeed, we cannot justify this permanence and authority, unless we can also show how an unvarying law may require diverse actions as circumstances vary, and as the knowledge of men is subject to change in respect to the actual import and effect of their conduct.

§ 87. The so-called ethical emotions must also be uniform in their character, and follow the ethical judgments in the experience of all moral beings. Self-approbation and its contrary, obligation to and against, and what is called the feeling of merit or demerit, are all necessarily connected with one another by a common necessity, and certain to emerge in the experience of every moral agent. Their presence is as certain and sure as are the phenomena of physical agents; and their laws are as fixed and eternal as those which prevail in the solar system. Their energy and purity and relative intensity may not be the same in every individual. These depend in part on natural temperament, and in part on acquired facility. The moral feelings, other things being equal, share with the other emotions in intensity and constancy, and in every other natural characteristic. The commanding sensibilities which we recognize as ethical are naturally intense or moderate, fervent or cool, enthusiastic or even, in harmony with the prevailing emotional temperament.

While exercise and culture add to their relative strength and their practical supremacy, neglect and open resistance weaken their relative energy. They retain the individual type imparted by nature or transmitted by inheritance. But in and above them all, the individual will is supreme in its capacity to direct and control, and by its direction and control to form and fix, those habits which are the priceless rewards of moral conflict and the strength and security of the moral and spiritual life.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MORAL JUDGMENTS AND FEELINGS.

§ 88. THAT the judgments of men concerning the right and wrong of particular actions are very largely the products of their circumstances and their education, is too obvious to admit of question. That their moral emotions are similarly influenced, seems equally obvious. How far and in what way these judgments and feelings are affected by each, is a fruitful theme for inquiry and discussion. This inquiry is the more important, in view of the very great diversity of opinion which prevails, in respect to the part which these influences have in forming and modifying the ethical judgments and standards of different communities and different individuals. Some writers are earnest and positive in asserting that the ethical judgments and feelings are entirely independent of and superior to any and all extraneous influences. Conscience, whether it be individual or public, in the view of such, is an infallible oracle ; and, whether it is regarded as reason or sentiment, its judgments and feelings are pronounced to be alike infallible and authoritative. Others represent, that, both as faculty and phenomena, they are solely the products of education and circumstances. Both these judgments are one-sided and extreme. For this reason it is the more

Moral judgments and feelings seem to be dependent on circumstances.

One-sided and extravagant statements in two directions.

important accurately to state, and carefully to qualify, these extreme statements in both directions, if we would do justice to the truths which both parties exaggerate and misapply.

§ 89. In treating the subject, we shall follow two lines of inquiry. (1) We shall trace that development of the moral judgments and feelings which is determined by the general laws of psychological growth. (2) We shall show how far an individual or a community may be affected in ethical opinion and feeling by education, law, religion, and public opinion. These two lines of inquiry cannot be entirely separated. No individual exists or is developed independently of his fellow-men. Into what seem to be the individual experiences, there must enter very largely the influences of the social atmosphere in which he has been trained. The individual in his turn re-acts against or with all these circumstances with greater or less energy and effect. There is a natural order of psychological development and progress which is followed in the history of every individual life. There is also a family and national and race psychology, in the growth of what is called the conscience of the family, the nation, and the race. To recognize and trace, in a general way, the operation of these common conditions of man's individual and social existence in their effects on the varied moral phenomena of theory and conduct which are so conspicuous in human experience, is absolutely necessary, if we would form a theory of morals which can be justified by the facts of observation and the teachings of history. We begin :

§ 90. (1) With the psychological development of moral activity in the history of the individual man. We would trace the natural order in which our conscious psychological experiences are developed, till the moral consciousness is fully established. We suppose no special guidance or stimulus to direct or quicken the natural development of the moral life.

Two lines of inquiry.

Ethical development of the individual and the community.

(1) Ethical growth of the individual.

The infant exercises, earliest of all, its appetites for food and drink, for warmth and sleep. It early learns to know the objects which will gratify these affections, by the presence of one or more of which it is impelled by desire towards the objects which will satisfy its longings. It subsequently learns that it cannot have these objects without effort, and very soon that it cannot gratify one desire without foregoing another. Thereupon and thereby it learns to use the efforts to which of itself it might be disinclined, and to sacrifice or refuse one desire and one action in order to gratify its competitor. In this way it learns the need and importance of self-control. By degrees it learns forecast and adaptation in the control of its activities; and, as a consequence, the acts and habits of prudence and self-command are begun and more or less matured. The wishes of other persons are soon brought into conflict with its own. The child early learns that others are stronger than himself; and also that certain of his own actions are permitted and furthered, while others are repressed and prevented. If he persists in acting as he desires, he is punished, first with corporal pain, and then by expressed displeasure. The favoring smile and the interpreted frown of nurse or parent soon become powerful motives to incite and restrain. The “Yes, yes,” the “No, no,” with the accompanying smile or frown, expresses what the child learns to value or dread most keenly; viz., the favor or disfavor of his fellows. It is not long before these consequences of evil or good to himself, in each of these forms, become closely associated with the actions which the child desires to do: the desire and fear of this good and evil are recognized as motives for the control or repression of impulses which would otherwise be allowed. The next step is for the child sharply to distinguish the two, — to separate the favor or disfavor of others from any outward consequences to himself by which these are expressed. That man is strongly moved by his susceptibility

Early
lessons of
self-control.

Lessons of
subjection
to others.

Distinction
between re-
sponsibility
to others and
to one's self.

to the good or ill opinion of others, cannot be doubted. It is equally clear, that, as the powers of discrimination and reflection are matured, and the sensibilities become more acute, he finds in this force a law to regulate not only his acts and his manners, but his feelings also. The child has taken an early but most important step in moral culture, when he learns to adopt fixed ways of action in deference to the wishes of his fellow-men. The first step in the moral culture of a child, or an infant race, says Bagehot, "is to secrete a crust of custom;" that is, to adjust his own ways of acting to those which he finds in operation among those with whom he is familiar.

So far the child is limited to those relations which are prudential only. His standard is taken from without, in the consequences which affect him from nature, society, or positive law. So soon, however, as he learns to look within, and to find in his own natural capacities the standard of judgment and the source of authority, so soon also as he applies this standard to his volitions or intentions, he rises from the prudential into the moral. The child does not consciously ascend into this higher region by a single bound. Gleams of this higher knowledge are now and then intermingled with the more distinct and intelligent recognition of the lower relations. The higher relations are not so much mingled as they are blended with these lower, giving them greater energy, and imparting to them a peculiar quality. The child seems to himself to hear and respond to a command of force or favor from without, while yet there is another voice from within recognizing the reasonableness and the excellence of the act required, and a response of feeling and motive superadded. Nor is it by any means necessary that a wide range of human capacities should pass in review before the eye of reflection, in order that the child should discern and accept an inner law,—the law written on the heart. It is only necessary that two impulses should conflict, in order that this law should emerge in the confessed natural superiority of one. Least of

all is it required that the law should be discerned as of universal application, or should be phrased in an abstract proposition, or enforced in general terms, in order that it may be recognized and honored. Most probably, as in all other forms of reflective thinking, the attention of the child will have been directed and stimulated by some sort of ethical teaching and discipline, rude or refined, pure or mixed. Domestic and social life, in their most imperfect and unethical forms, appeal more or less frequently, and with more or less directness, to the law which every one carries within himself. Religion also, however debasing and unethical many of its precepts may be, always enjoins some duties of act or emotion to which the dormant moral convictions respond, though often in a blind and indiscriminating fashion.

Last of all, man reaches the final stage in the development of his moral consciousness when he distinctly recognizes the truth, that he is a law to himself ; that, in his natural capacities, he finds the aim and standard for his voluntary activities ; and that according to their compliance with this law, or their failure, he must approve or condemn himself. This is the ideal generalization towards which all other ethical axioms or principles tend. Very few in fact reach this or any other principle in an abstract or scientific form. So soon, however, as any approximately high generalization is attained ; so soon, indeed, as any single principle or system of principles is assented to, — the way is prepared for a system of practical rules which is derived from these principles with more or less logical rigor and coherence. Henceforth the development of the moral consciousness of the individual proceeds in this direction, as each individual forms for himself his own practical code of duty in the ways already explained.

Final discovery that this law is in his own nature.

These steps not independent of instruction.

It would be a serious mistake to infer that this development can take place on the part of any individual independently of social instruction and social influences.

It is as true of ethical knowledge as it is of knowledge of any other description, that the larger portion of that which finally shines by its own light, and might perhaps be attained by personal reflection, is anticipated by the instruction of others, and comes to us in the forms of propositions of truth and duty, which are enforced by authority. Ethical truth, so far as it is self-evident, is like all self-evident truth in this regard. In some respects, however, ethical truth is peculiar for its possible independence and autonomy. Hence our second inquiry, which is of special interest and importance; viz., —

(2) How far are the moral judgments of men dependent on circumstances, and how far are they beyond and above their control?

This inquiry introduces the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES AS HELPS OR HINDERANCES IN
MORALS.

§ 91. THE most conspicuous of these influences are, *education, public sentiment, civil government, and religion.* These comprehend the leading accessory influences by which the moral judgments and feelings are modified, by help or hinderance, in the family, the state, the church, and the community of men. Of these the first three are organized, and the last stands for mankind united by those social ties which are more or less informal and transient. These several agencies or influences are alike in this, that they aid or hinder the motives which are purely and properly moral by those which are *extra* but not necessarily *anti-moral*. These motives have this one feature in common, that they are addressed to the susceptibility of man to the favor or disfavor of his fellows. These social and personal forces are most important factors in the formation of the moral judgments, tastes, and character. We do not detract in the least from the importance of the responsibility and independence of the individual, when we assert that they very largely determine the moral codes which the individual man receives unconsciously, and, as it were, by induction, and that they exert a powerful influence in determining the direction and the energy of the moral feelings. Every family has its own moral code concerning the major and the minor moralities, which the child accepts with little questioning, and which often remains to the

Classes of
social
influences.

The family.

end of life, with little change, and usually with an inveterate and tenacious hold of the associations.— The emotional atmosphere of every household is in a greater or less degree a life-giving stimulant, or a noxious and stifling poison, to the ethical impulses of the individual. The school repeats similar processes, with similar effects. Society, by its ever-shifting but always plastic public opinion and feeling, is constantly inspiring and moulding the rules and impulses of action, and enforcing them by its subtile and penetrating presence. The laws and tribunals of every community are, to not a few, the only distinctly recognized standard of duty, and the only enforcers of moral authority (§ 41). Religion is a constant director of ethical opinion, and minister of those fears and hopes which take the strongest hold of man's being, as they are derived from another life, and stimulate the conscience and the affections to the intensest activity. All these forces are subject to laws of progress and development, as also to laws of retrogradation and degeneracy. They carry the individual with them backward and forward, upward and downward, by an influence which is always powerful, and which often seems irresistible.

§ 92. When we examine these extra-ethical forces more carefully, we find :—

(1) They do not originate, nor can they reverse or alter, those moral judgments and emotions which respect the fundamental relations of duty. These, as we have already explained, can neither be imparted by simple instruction, nor enforced by bare authority. They are originated by and within the soul itself. They are discerned directly by its intuitive insight. They are enforced by a self-derived and self-imposed authority which the man can share with no other being.

No more can they create or destroy the strong emotions which necessarily attend these intuitions. These emotions spring up within the soul itself, and derive the exquisiteness of their joy

and pain from the fact that the soul deals directly and solely with itself.

§ 93. (2) The intuitional power may, however, be directed and aided by instruction, and stimulated by discipline. Induction and testimony are largely dependent on the observations and conclusions of older and wiser men. The purely ethical emotions may be energized and quickened or repressed by sympathy or hostility from others.

(2) They aid and quicken the intuitional power.

Instruction may aid the intuitive power enormously, by declaring what it will find to be true if it looks within, and by directing its untried efforts at reflection. The celebrated Pascal, in his early youth, discovered or constructed for himself many of the most important theorems in plane geometry, without either book or instructor. Doubtless his mastery of these theorems would have been greatly furthered, had he been guided by a good text-book, which would have gathered and arranged the results of previous generations. And yet not a single one of these theorems can be taught except as the mind of the pupil is directed how to analyze and combine for itself the materials which suggest the self-evident relations that reveal themselves with every successive step. By guidance and anticipation, instruction facilitates the progress of the student. In one sense, intuitive moral truths may be and are taught, both in the abstract and concrete, in principle or application, whenever parents, teachers, magistrates, or prophets announce intuitive moral truths in distinct and forcible words. It should ever be remembered, however, that what they primarily achieve is to declare what the learner will find to be true if he will follow their guidance in looking within himself.

The intuitional power may also be stimulated by discipline; that is, its efforts at reflection may be excited by the special motives which these social

These agencies train and discipline.

forces apply. We do not ask, at this point, whether motives of this class are lower than others in dignity and moral

worth. It is enough that we know that they are necessary and efficient in awakening to thought, and in stimulating to the discovery of moral truth, — even of that truth which shines with its own light, and warms from its own fires. Those truths and rules of duty which are not intuitive, but are gained by induction, manifestly depend on the experience and testimony of others. In this field, each generation can make acquisitions which can be imparted to the generation which follows. Parents may learn moral wisdom for their children, teachers for their pupils, public opinion may be permanently enlightened, legislation may be more wise, and the stream of tradition be more and more richly freighted with valuable lessons gathered from the wisdom of the past. It is not information chiefly, nor testimony, that comes to us in this way from the authority of others. It is the self-evidencing truth of many opinions of one man and of one generation, which is so readily understood and accepted by other men and other generations. The reasonableness of other moral truths is often nearly self-evidencing, even though the truths are not axiomatic. Multitudes of inductions concerning morals and manners need only to be stated in language, and gain a hearing, in order to command unquestioning assent, and be added to the permanent wisdom of the next generation.

§ 94. (3) The relation of *extra-ethical* or *social motives* to those which are purely ethical comes next in order. The relation of extra-ethical to ethical motives. These two classes of influences may conspire together, or they may be sharply antagonistic. It is instructive to trace the agency of the impulses which proceed from these sources, as they help or hinder the emotions that are excited within the individual alone. The parent may command the child to obey or disobey his conscience, as he values the father's favor, or dreads his displeasure. The teacher may do the same. So may the magistrate. The prophet may do the same for the God in whose name he speaks.

(a) The feeling of self-approbation, and its opposite, in their original and simple forms are dependent, as we have seen, on the soul which originates and feels them. But a man is rarely so isolated and self-sufficing, either in youth or age, that he does not interpret his own self-approval and disapproval as also indicating the approval or disapproval of his fellow-men. The joy of self-approval, and the torments of remorse, as usually felt by a member of a well-ordered community, are largely the reflex of the favor or displeasure of those of his fellows to whom the man is most nearly allied. It may happen, however, not unfrequently it does happen, that the acts and feelings for which a man approves himself the most, and the most reasonably, bring on him reproach and dishonor from other men. The patriots and martyrs of liberty have often stood in the pillory, and been forced to endure the jeers and contempt of multitudes for the convictions which have subsequently justified themselves to the consciences of other generations. When Sir Harry Vane was dragged on a sledge up Tower Hill for his execution, the few "who saw liberty and virtue sitting by his side" were silenced, if not cowed and shamed, by the derisive shouts of the mob. The martyrs and confessors of religion have often suffered more from "the cruel mockings" of their fellows than from the fires in which they have been burned, or the tortures by which they have been torn. When our personal self-approval conspires with that of our fellow-men, it is not easy to distinguish the one joy from the other. It is impossible not to separate the two when they move in opposite directions, and come into sharp collision.

Self-approbation and self-reproach, how modified.

Mens conscia recti, etc.

§ 95. (b) The sense of obligation, as men usually know it, represents more than the original feeling which the soul creates for itself. It suggests more or less of personal authority from without, either of man or God, or both united, enforcing their will by personal favor or the opposite. These several elements are not

The sense of obligation and the authority of our fellows.

always distinguished. The child does not always separate the *ought* which springs up and is enforced from within, from “the categorical imperative” of the parent’s command. The same is true of the man who recognizes public sentiment as his law, or the will of the magistrate, or the will of the Supreme. When these several oughts conspire and blend together, they are felt as a single force impelling and directing to one goal. But when they are sundered, and come into collision, they fly apart in diverse directions, and present themselves in striking contrast. When the child is suddenly or slowly awakened to the conviction that there is little or no moral authority in the command of the parent whom he has hitherto venerated or feared as God; when the man is forced by his conscience to rebel against the tyranny of public sentiment or of despotic lawlessness, or the prescriptions of an immoral religion, — then the ought that is supreme within is brought into direct conflict with the oughts that are imposed from without. Conflicts between these opposing emotions often awaken doubt, inquiry, and painful struggles. Even though the decision be clear, it is not easy to shake off sacred and long-cherished associations. Such an inward conflict always has the elements of a tragedy; and the struggle is often followed by an actual tragedy within the soul that is shattered by the efforts which are incident to either a conquest or defeat, or involves a tragedy to the persons or interests that reflect these conflicting forces. The ancient tragedy found ample material for its pathos in the sacred supremacy of the State or the Laws, when brought into collision with the individual conscience or the dictates of natural affection. The death of Socrates in real life, and the sacrilegious daring of Antigone upon the stage, are two examples. All human history, both domestic and social, abounds in similar pathetic and agonizing dramas.

(c) It is with merit and demerit, as it is with obligation and self-approval. Just and true standards may be accepted and enforced from without, which conspire with those which spring

up from within ; or those which are factitious and false may be rejected when tested by those which the individual finds within himself.

§ 96. As to standards of moral beauty, and the feelings which they awaken, it is notorious that at one time they accord with nature and with truth, and that at another they grossly offend against both. There are good and bad fashions for the manners, the amusements, the worship, the laws, and the conduct, which are the outward expression of the inward judgments and feelings of both individuals and communities. Sometimes the outward is unjust and untrue to the inward, and lags behind it. Sometimes it is better than the opinions and feelings and purposes, — a whited sepulchre, containing the decaying relics of what was once a breathing and living body, glowing with life and beauty.

Standards of moral beauty, how far variable.

As we review these auxiliary or extra-ethical agencies, two inquiries are suggested : Why, and to what extent, may they not teach error to the intellect as successfully as they teach the truth? and, Why are they not as effective in moving the feelings for evil as for good? To these questions, the answers will be brief, inasmuch as they have in effect been provided for in the analysis previously given.

(1) *The fundamental principles of duty are never openly assailed nor formally denied by any one of these auxiliary agents.* No teachings or influences from parents, teachers, lawgivers, or priests, have ever ventured to assail or deny the axioms of morality when formally or explicitly expressed in language. None, in this sense of the word, have ever put “darkness for light, or light for darkness;” none have called “good evil, or evil good.” It might be said, indeed, that they have had no occasion to consider these principles in the abstract; it being reserved for philosophers only, in the secret recesses of abstract thought, to concern themselves with the truth or falsehood of

The fundamental principles never openly assaulted.

principles of this kind. On the other hand, it is clear that these truths are more or less clearly recognized, and assented to, so far as they are uniformly appealed to in justification of acts and feelings which need excuse or explanation. Every command of parent, teacher, or magistrate, if enforced by any reason, is enforced by a reason found in the well-being of the individual and community. Every conflict between the two is justified by some reference to the common good. "Virtue," says Butler, "is that which all ages and all countries have made profession of in public; it is that which the primary and fundamental laws of all civil institutions over the face of the earth make it their business and endeavor to enforce the practice of upon mankind; namely, justice, veracity, and regard to the common good" (*Diss.*, II.).

These agents cannot teach error as effectively as the truth; because the evidence which man has within himself in support of the truth is such as no assertion can deny, and no sophistry can overthrow. They can withdraw the attention from the fundamental intuitions of right and wrong; they can confound true and qualified statements of these truths with those which are extravagant or obscure, and so bring them into suspicion or rejection: but they can never bring the mind which conceives them in their true import squarely and openly to deny them.

(2) In respect to *the moral import of external actions*, and consequently in respect to the truth and authority of the principles and rules which provide for such actions, they can err in their knowledge of facts, and in the inductions which they derive from facts as actually or imperfectly generalized. For both these reasons, they may teach serious error in respect to many very important duties. In respect to many actions, we find that the import is too clear and the evidence is too overwhelming to make it possible to mislead or deceive for a long time in continuance. Comprehensive and far-reaching mistakes

External agencies cannot teach error so effectively as the truth.

They can partially, but not wholly, mislead in respect to external conduct.

in respect to important duties may prevail in large communities for a long time; but the errors of one generation are often more or less completely outgrown by the next, even if they give way to another class of errors as serious as themselves. Interests which bias the judgment, and passions which blind it, are yet changed in such form that there is a constant tendency toward the abandonment of error, if not to the acceptance of the truth.

(3) The second question was: Why are not these influences as effective for evil as for good? Our answer is, Because the motives from without, in their power to affect the strongest feelings of men, cannot be compared with those motives which spring up from within, provided the two are brought into direct collision. The one may engross the attention and seem to command the assent; they may, so to speak, occupy the country; but their power is that of a confessed usurper, against whom his oppressed and lawful rival is ever ready to rise in revolt. There is no way to repress or silence the voice of conscience in respect to fundamental truths, unless the attention is diverted, or the sensibilities are deadened. Man must have his own self-approval, to be truly self-satisfied. No enjoyment from without, no favor of all the universe besides, can compensate for the loss of this good, involving as it must the worst of all sufferings, his own self-condemnation.

Their influences not so effective for evil as for good.

§ 97. This analysis enables us more satisfactorily to explain how and why it is that what are called the standards of morality are so different in different communities and at different times. So far as the intentions or purposes which should control the character are concerned, it is impossible that any man or any community which earnestly reflects, and is trained to the capacity to generalize, should not adopt the same standard. As we have said already, it would be impossible to lead any man or any community to accept any formulated principle or any

These principles explain the differences in the standards of morality.

positive law which contradicts the ultimate axioms of morality in respect to the fundamental relations of duty. Moreover, all defective or vicious teachings of special duties give an implied recognition or a tacit homage to these fundamental principles. Whenever a practice that is known to be morally wrong is palliated or defended, it is always in the name of the individual or general good, thereby implying that to aim at the general good is man's dignity and duty. The grossest vices and the most atrocious acts of cruelty are uniformly justified or excused by a reference to some end which is assumed to be worthy, obligatory, and right.

But all men do not reflect, either upon the principles of duty in the abstract, or the most obvious inferences from them in the way of application. Indolence and passion, and a deference to custom and tradition, cause the intellect to rust through inaction, or to be perverted by misdirection. The social influences so often named by us take a strong hold of each new mind that comes under their power, and mould him after the will of the leaders of opinion. These rarely rebuke the ethical motives which are friendly to their aims of wealth and pre-eminence. Under the slow operations of the lessons of experience, with now and then an active and energetic impulse from an occasional reformer, who is more sagacious and single-hearted than his generation, the special standard of an age or a community, if it is raised at all, will be raised but slowly.

§ 98. These thoughts suggest the further inquiry, *How and by what agencies can the standard of morality be improved in any considerable degree?*

The first condition is education in the double form of instruction and discipline. To lead an individual or a community to accept an improved standard of morality, each man must think clearly and honestly, and confide in the testimony and observation of those who are best informed in respect to the operations of conduct and character. If men are unwilling of themselves

Conditions of
improvement
in ethical
standards:
Education.

to attend to the self-evident truths which they would find if they would seek them, they may be impelled by the force of mere authority, i.e., by extra-ethical influences. Moral truth may be enforced upon their respect and obedience by an efficient and high-toned public sentiment; by a legislation that is wisely conceived and impartially administered; and, by what is more efficient than all else, a religion that 'supplies man's moral needs, and is true in fact and history. These are the agencies by which the moral standard of a generation or a community can be improved.¹

The theory of morals can never, in fact, be elevated unless the lives and characters of men are also reformed. The reasons are obvious. Men will not study the theory of morals with sustained attention unless they feel a strong interest in ethical truths, and a practical sympathy with them. If its truths, so far as they are known or discovered, only contradict and reprove their actions and their characters, they will dislike to think of them. Intellectual progress in the moral standards of individuals and communities is at once the cause and the effect of an improvement in their practical morality. It is true, after a high standard has once been attained, it may survive for a time the degeneracy of a succeeding generation. It is possible, and even probable, that such a generation may excuse or palliate its own vices by the reverence which it pays to the stricter theories of the past, or by a merely speculative interest in the reasonings and conclusions which these include. In this sense it is true that men compound for the liberty to dishonor the teachings of the prophets of a preceding generation by building and decorating their sepulchres. Ordinarily, however, men do not care to occupy their intellects with truths in which they feel no positive interest, much less if these truths point to duties and sacrifices which are positively

**Reformation
of character
and life.**

¹ Cf. Principal J. C. SHAIRP, *The Moral Dynamic; Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*: Edinburgh, 1868.

distasteful; and therefore it usually happens that a practical degeneracy makes itself manifest in an entire neglect of the theory of morals. This neglect is manifested in a forgetfulness of its fundamental principles, or a sophistical and shallow explanation of their import and authority, or a feeble enforcement of the practical rules of living and action.

§ 99. Such a degeneracy of ethical science, and corruption of ethical life, are ordinarily removed by an earnest work of *reformation*. The possibility of a reformation in ethical speculation and practice can be understood by a reference to those personal influences of men on one another which have been enumerated. We need not inquire what agencies awaken the reformer to profounder convictions of moral truth, and a clearer discernment of moral rules. We must suppose that he has both, coupled with that ardor and enthusiasm which they are fitted to inspire. Whether this ever happens except under some kind of supernatural incitement, we need not determine. It is enough that we are assured that individual men now and then attain the force and fire which give them personal power over their fellows. The grounds or reasons for these stronger convictions are rational; the impulses which they feel are the kindling fires that have long been ready to flash into a glowing flame. Their power to affect others is also eminently natural. Let one man believe and feel strongly on moral themes, and he becomes at once a power with his fellow-men. The assertion of convictions by one earnest man evokes responsive convictions from all who hear his words. The better feelings are aroused by sympathy with any zealous and earnest soul. Common convictions and common feelings, when fused into a common conscience, create a powerful social force. If the conscience of an individual is the most powerful individual agency that man knows of, the assenting and consenting conscience of a company of men is a resistless power, now a rushing stream, and then a sweeping torrent. As soon as a small

Reformation
of speculative
and practical
morals.

The instru-
mentalities
are rational.

community of animated reformers is constituted, it begins to teach others with a sort of social authority, provided always it speaks to the consenting convictions of those to whom it appeals. It creates and enforces a public sentiment of its own, which penetrates and overmasters the public sentiment by which it is surrounded. If the reformers are moved by the inspiration of God, they employ an appeal to a more powerful agency, which is both individual and social.

The effects are often surprising in power, rapidity, and permanence. Moral and religious convictions which had been dormant for generations suddenly spring into life. Truths that had been suppressed in or under an unrighteous life assert at once their regal authority. Practices which had been sanctioned by the interests and made venerable by the traditions of many generations, which had been justified by precedent and made sacred by religion, are all at once discovered to be venerable impostures or outrageous wrongs. It is only after repeated and hard-fought battles, that they are reluctantly abandoned. Rules of action that had never been suspected of being unsound are confessed to be false in theory and pernicious in their working. Profounder principles of duty are accepted, or wiser and more enlightened applications of principles already received are readily made. Ancient and modern history abound in the records of reforms of this sort. They are not always brief in their duration. Not infrequently a steady and long-continued impulse of ethical progress has followed, as the result of which the manners and the morals of great communities have been improved in theory and in conduct, in every department of human life. Legislation, commerce, education, domestic life, social intercourse, festive habits, the use of food, drink, clothing, and amusements, all have felt the influence of its uplifting and on-moving tide.

The effects
are often
surprising.

They are
also permanent.

Inasmuch as every form of public and private activity is embraced within the domain of duty, in proportion as these

relations are studied in an enlightened spirit, there is opportunity to improve the rules of duty more perfectly in all their applications.

The zeal of reformers is often excessive. Their practical deductions are often derived from insufficient data. They are not infrequently ignorant of many of the facts which are material to a correct conclusion. Their dogmatism is often offensive in proportion to its positiveness; and their denunciations in the name of liberty, temperance, and religion are kindled by any thing rather than a truly prophetic fire. So long, however, as men shall fail to honor the axioms of morality with the fervent faith which their self-evident truth is fitted to inspire, and to derive from them their just applications, so long will there be a call for the work of the reformer; and so long as man has the capacity to be moved and inspired to faith in moral truth by personal and social enthusiasm, so long will there be promise of success.

The zeal of
reformers
is often
excessive.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAW OF HONOR.

§ 100. OUR analysis of the relations of social influences to the moral convictions and feelings explains the so-called law of honor, and its relations to the law of duty.

The law of honor is a product of society. Its rules of action and its impulses of feeling are derived from so- The product of society. ciety; its sanctions of duty are enforced by society. Hence its imperfections and its evils. The society which creates and enforces this law is, however, composed of moral beings, who cannot be entirely forgetful or careless of moral relations, and cannot but often recognize and respect the sanctions of conscience. Hence its dignity, its attractiveness, and its authority.

The very term "honor" presupposes the existence of society. Honor is the favorable regard, sympathy, or esteem The term social in its import. felt and expressed by one or many for the acts or character of a person, or the kindly and respectful estimate in which a man is held by his fellows in an organized and permanent community. As soon as this is made the motive or direction of the conduct, we have the beginning or germ of honor acting as a law. Objectively, this law is imposed by society. Subjectively, it addresses the susceptibility and desire of man for the good opinion of his fellow-men.

So far the law of honor would seem to be the same with what

Locke calls the law of opinion (*Essay*, book ii., chap. 28, §§ 10, 11). What is technically called the law of honor, however, supposes a special and limited community, more or less definitely organized for specific ends, and giving or withdrawing its favor only on conditions well understood. In every society of this sort, this law is framed with reference to the purposes for which the society exists, and the conditions which are acknowledged to be essential to the attainment of these ends. It should not be at all surprising, — it follows as a necessary consequence, — that the law of honor is different in each of these societies. There is one law of honor for lawyers, another for physicians, another for clergymen, another for merchants, another for artists, another for gamblers, another for thieves, another for gentlemen justly conceived, another for gentlemen falsely so called.

§ 101. In every case, the law rests upon and grows out of an implied contract or mutual understanding between the parties who compose the society, that, as long as they comply with the conditions which are prescribed by the community, they shall be entitled to certain privileges. To all these privileges, every member of the society has an equal claim; and, so far as these are concerned, all are on a footing of equality.

This law is usually unwritten, for the reason that it is sufficiently determined and defined by the ends for which each society exists, and the means or conditions that are acknowledged to be necessary for its realization.

For example: lawyers are, by the nature of their profession, constantly brought into open collision with one another; as they are bound to assert and defend the cause of their clients with every suitable appliance and the utmost of ingenuity and eloquence. In a certain sense, they must make the cause of their clients their own. In the conduct of their cases, they are exposed to potent temptations to overstep the limits of reason and courtesy. Hence certain

Supposes a limited and special community.

Rests upon an implied contract.

The law more or less definite, though unwritten.

Example of lawyers.

rules are carefully framed and rigidly enforced in respect to the treatment of papers, of witnesses and the opposing counsel, and also in respect to the freedom of language which may be allowed. The moral reach of these rules may be very limited : and yet, so far as they go, they have an ethical import ; they tend to necessary or most desirable results, and for this reason are readily accepted and rigidly enforced. An advocate who grossly violates them is punished by the judge for “ contempt of court,” or “ thrown over the bar ” for unprofessional conduct. Similarly, among physicians, conduct which is unprofessional has come to be distinctly recognized, and more or less rigidly punished, not infrequently under a definite and written code. In trade and commerce, in banking and brokerage, certain methods of procedure must be insisted on as the indispensable conditions of the convenient, if not of the possible, transaction of business ; and these are distinctly recognized and rigidly enforced as the rules of the guild. Among thieves and gamblers, the rules of the craft and of play are accepted and exacted as tests of that conduct which is counted honorable in such a fraternity. Among gentlemen, especially when “ this grand old English word ” is used in its higher signification, the law of honor respects far higher ends, and imposes rules of profounder significance. The three cardinal virtues which it recognizes and makes the most of are *truth*, *courage*, and *courtesy*, in speech, manners, and conduct.

Of physi-
cians, mer-
chants,
thieves, and
gamblers.

Among
gentlemen.

§ 102. The law of honor does not profess to control the motives or the character. It necessarily limits itself to the manners, the words, and the deeds ; albeit it sometimes regulates these with rigorous preciseness, and judges them with stern severity. A man may be false at heart, and yet rigidly hold to his word among gentlemen. He may be intensely coarse and selfish, and yet, in his manners, may scrupulously observe the rules of courtesy. He may be cowardly in feeling, and yet not dare to desert his post when

Does not
respect the
motives.

in danger. And yet, if he does all that the law of honor prescribes, he is entitled to all the privileges of a gentleman.

Special conditions may be required for admission to any and all of these societies, pre-eminently to that of gentlemen, — as wealth or social position, or that refinement which comes of culture or family; but once admitted, no matter on what conditions, the rule holds good, that all the members of this favored society are peers so long as they observe the laws which are recognized by the fraternity to which they belong.

Conditions
and privi-
leges.

In asserting that this law concerns itself only with the external actions, we do not overlook the fact that the words “honor” and “honorable” are very often and very significantly applied to the feelings and purposes. They are so because in such cases the feelings are interpreted by the acts. They are conceived and described as the impulses which would issue in honorable words, manners, and deeds. In such cases, the nice sense of honor reaches no farther than a sensitive estimate of what is honorable in action, and a constant purpose to exemplify it. Or, as is often true, the law of honor is recognized as the law of duty; and honorable acts and feelings are interpreted to be such as are moralized and enforced by the conscience. This fact explains why the law of honor in its higher forms is so excellent and noble in its influence. To many it is a discipline to virtue, the decorated vestibule which attracts to the severer court within, in which virtue dwells and receives the supreme and undivided homage of those who have been schooled to her more spiritual service.

It is in this sense that it is described in the well-known lines: —

“ Say, what is honor ? ’Tis the finest sense
Of justice which the human mind can frame,
Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,
And guard the way of life from all offence
Suffered or done.”

WORDSWORTH.

Often applied
to the feel-
ings and
purposes.

§ 103. The *defects* of the law of honor, taken as the only rule of life, are manifest. First of all, even in its better forms, it respects only a part of man's nature. Even when it is most exacting and spiritual in its demands, its requirements neither penetrate so widely nor so deeply as does the law of duty. Hence, as a rule of feeling and action, it is necessarily imperfect and incomplete. Even at its best, it is but a part of the feelings and the actions which it would regulate. Whatever it may seem to gain in force and energy by its narrowness and concentration, it loses in respect to the depth and richness of the principles which it fails to recognize.

Its defects.
Respects a
part of man's
nature.

Not unfrequently it divides and distracts the nature of man, setting one impulse against another. Thus the law of honor forces the duellist to violate many of the noblest and tenderest affections, — to set aside, if not to trample on, the otherwise acknowledged and imperative obligations of conscience at the factitious and often the cruel and tyrannical call of his guild. Even when it does not openly corrupt the principles or offend the conscience, it exercises a biasing influence which warps from the highest integrity, and weakens individual self-respect and independence, making a man the slave of a superficial and often an artificial social sentiment. In politics it works all manner of mischief through a servile bondage to party; and in religion it is at once sanctimonious and bigoted, worshipping in the streets rather than in the closet, ascetic, pharisaic, selfish, and proud. The man who confessedly and deliberately makes the law of honor supreme must in heart and principle be a traitor to conscience and to God.

Divides and
distracts the
being.

§ 104. On the other hand, the law of honor is attractive to the moralist, especially when manifested in its noblest and more elevated forms. It clearly shows, by its effects in the manners and actions, to what consummate perfection a limited class of external virtues may

Why attrac-
tive to the
moralist.

attain. It operates with intense energy and surprising effects.

Is energetic. It is interesting to observe for ourselves, and to read in history, what rare perfection of courage, fidelity, truth, and courtesy have been attained under its influence, and out of what rough material at times such grace and courage have emerged, especially in military life, and under the stimulus and formative energy of a professional *esprit de corps*. The refinement and strength of this sentiment in its noblest exemplifications were most felicitously characterized by Burke as "that chastity of honor which felt a stain like a wound." In view of its energy to inspire and refine, to transform and re-create, the moralist cannot but say to himself, If this inferior and partial force can work such effects of transforming energy and almost creative power, what might not be made of man if the law of duty when rightly understood, being in its nature more wide, more energetic, more penetrating, and more refining, could take as efficient possession, and exert as powerful influence on the whole man and the society which he would form, and by which he in turn would be transformed and inspired!

The moralist notices, again, that this law of honor is in a certain sense an artificial growth or creation of a society of like-minded men, agreeing to rule and obey one another in respect to certain acts and emotions. He cannot but observe how this artificial and often capricious and changing social product has attained amazing permanence and power. Men sacrifice to it their lives, their health, their dearest interests, and often their nobler reputation and truer fame, not infrequently even that moral life from which the law of honor itself derives all the dignity and authority with which it rules the men whom it destroys. In view of these excellences and defects, he can scarcely withhold himself from asking the devotee of this product of social life, whether it does not justify faith and obedience with respect to that higher law of duty, which has its origin in the nature of the individual soul, its confirmation in social forces, and its sanction in the authority of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONSCIENCE.

§ 105. WE complete our analysis of man's moral nature by giving special consideration to the doctrine of *The Conscience*. In discussing this theme, we can add little or nothing to what has already been proposed in principle and fact, if we change it somewhat in form and phrase. We can do little more than gather and represent the results of our inquiries in a different order. The reason for presenting a second time these conclusions under this new title is found in the fact, that, *speculatively*, conscience is not infrequently either vaguely conceived or misconceived; while *practically*, perplexing questions concerning the conscience are so often raised and so unsatisfactorily answered.

The subject
has been
anticipated.

The conscience is very frequently used, we might almost say more commonly, to designate the entire moral constitution or nature of man, whatever this is conceived to be. Those who hold this moral nature to be a separate faculty, not infrequently call this faculty the conscience. Thus Dr. Thomas Reid defines it as "an original power of the mind, or moral faculty, by which we have the conceptions of right and wrong in human conduct, and the dictates of which form the first principles of morals." Others limit the term to the capacity of the moral nature for a limited class of functions. They deny to conscience the function of apprehending or constructing the law or standard of duty, and they limit it to the office of applying this law in judg-

Often used
for the
entire moral
nature.

ing the feelings and actions. Thus, President Mark Hopkins says, the law being supposed to be known, "We may define it (i.e., the conscience) to be the whole moral consciousness of man in view of his own actions and as related to moral law" (*The Law of Love*, etc., p. i., div. viii.). In such an application, those feelings, and those only, which attend this special function, are also referred to the conscience.

The reason why the term is so generally accepted as the appropriate designation for the moral nature, wholly or in part, is not far to seek. The moral processes are recognized as uniformly those in which consciousness is intensified into reflection. Hence in the Greek we have *Συνείδησις*, and in the Latin and its derived languages we have *consciūs*, *conscientia*, and *le conscience*. In the German we have *das Gewissen*, from *wissen* (to know), which is nearly allied to *Bewusstsein* and *Selbstbewusstsein*. These last-named terms bring into strong relief the certainty or confidence which attends the operations of the moral faculty.

Conscience should not be used as an appellation for a separate or special moral faculty, for the reason that there is no such faculty. Every step and result of the preceding analysis has gone to show this. The consciousness of all men will also testify, that, in our moral experiences, all the so-called psychical powers are brought into requisition and active service. Our consciousness is equally explicit and decided in affirming that to these experiences no new endowment or higher potency of either intellect, sensibility, or will is known to be introduced. Nor can the presence of either be inferred. Such a theory or inference, moreover, is itself contrary to all analogy. Neither the intellect, sensibility, or will is known to exercise peculiar functions, or to follow different laws than when employed upon other subject-matter. The same intellect, so far as it knows itself, acts with respect to moral relations under the same laws, and by the same methods of comparison, deduction, and inference, as when it is concerned with other material.

Nor can we discover new and peculiar intuitions or categories, whether directly furnished by the intellect or indirectly derived from the sensibility or moral sense. The only intuition which makes itself conspicuous is the intuition of adaptation, which involves design. But this intuition, it need not be said, is in no sense limited to the moral intellect or moral reason, but is assumed as the postulate of science and philosophy in every form. The materials with which the conscience operates and which it presupposes are those voluntary states and acts which are the joint products of the sensibility and will. Given the will as the power to choose; given the sensibility as capable of active impulses; given a higher and lower in the good of which man is capable; given the self-conscious intellect to discriminate and reflect, discerning the ends and adaptations of the soul; and given the power to enforce its laws by motives from within, as also to review the past, to judge the present, and to forecast the future, — and you have all the endowments required for the entire range of moral activities, judgments, and emotions.

It is not any single endowment that constitutes man a moral being, nor is it one conspicuously when added to the rest; but it is the mutual relationship and joint activity of all those endowments which constitute the soul a psychical organism. Conspicuous among these endowments is consciousness; and hence consciousness is in a sense the representative of the whole, pre-eminently those of thought and feeling, which are concerned in forming and applying the rule of duty to direct and judge of the moral activities.

Consciousness conspicuous in the moral functions.

§ 106. It is, therefore, to a part only of these endowments, that the special appellation of the conscience is applied; viz., to the intellect and the sensibility in those judgments and feelings which are concerned with the acts and states of the will. The will, being the capacity for moral choices, is never included under the conscience except in the loosest and vaguest use of the appellation.

Conscience limited to the intellect and sensibility.

The will furnishes the object-matter about which the conscience judges and feels. In speaking or thinking of the conscience, we suppose an act or state of the will to be proposed for the future, or to have been achieved in the past. The will furnishes this material for conscience to work upon; and therefore the will is not included under conscience, either as a power, an act, or a product. The will is a condition of its exercise, but in no sense is it the subject of its functions.

Usually, also, this subject-matter is conceived as something which is past. It is true that we often speak of scruples of conscience, of the commands of conscience, which terms can apply only to acts or feelings which are thought of, but not yet achieved: but the more vivid and striking examples of its activity are those of actions done, not imagined; achieved, not anticipated. Hence the vocabulary and diction of the conscience in conversation and literature.

We repeat the proposition, conscience is limited to the intellect and sensibility when employed upon a special subject-matter. That it is applied to both the intellect and the sensibility, is evident from the popular language, which speaks with equal freedom of the *judgments* and *decisions* of conscience, and of its *pains* and *pleasures*. Bishop Butler, notwithstanding his characteristic caution, affirms the same in the following: "It is manifest that a great part of common language and of common behavior over the world is formed upon supposition of such a moral faculty, whether called conscience, moral reason, moral sense, or divine reason; whether considered as a perception of the understanding, or a sentiment of the heart, or, which seems the truth, *as including both*" (*Diss.*, II.).

§ 107. The term "conscience" has still another application.

Applied to
their prod-
ucts also.

It is not limited to these functions which we have named. It also designates the results of these operations in the special judgments or conclusions which are reached in regard to matters of duty, and the special

feelings which follow. The conscience of an individual or a community is figuratively used as a collective term for the sum of its acknowledged rules of duty, and for the energy and quality of the prevalent emotions which attend them. Each man is supposed to have formed for himself a code of those special rules or standards for the direction and trial of his character and his actions. These are often spoken of as *his conscience*. This conscience is characterized intellectually as enlightened or darkened; emotionally, as torpid, hardened, seared, or active, wakeful, and scrupulous. By a similar usage, we extend to a community these conceptions and this terminology; and think and speak of *the public conscience*, of the conscience of a nation or a period, as the collective statement or conception of the principles or rules concerning duty which are generally acknowledged by a particular community, or at a special period of its history and development. Inasmuch as this changing condition of the intellect in a society of men carries with itself changing habits and conditions of feeling, we also speak of the conscience of a community or a period as hardened or wakeful, “seared as with a hot iron,” etc.

In accordance with this theory, the schoolmen distinguished conscience as *Συντήρησις* (i.e., the internal repository of accepted precepts or rules); conscience as *Συνείδησις* (i.e., as witness); and conscience as *Ἐπίκρισις* (i.e., as judge and executioner).

Συντήρησις,
Συνείδησις,
and
Ἐπίκρισις.

Keeping in mind that conscience as a power includes the two elements of intellect and feeling, we observe, —

§ 108. (a) That as an intellectual power it is subject to the conditions and laws of the intellect as employed upon various kinds of subject-matter. In respect to certain relations and questions of duty, it is infallible, while in respect to others it is fallible. As we have stated and urged already in respect to the end of man's active nature and the consequent law of his will, conscience cannot be mistaken if it attentively considers this subject-

As an intellectual power. How far infallible and fallible.

matter. No more can it be mistaken when called to judge whether man ought to choose according to duty. Many circumstances may hinder an attentive application of the mind to the relations in question; as a defect in the generalizing power, or in the habit of reflection, or in a strong disinclination to use the intellect aright. Each of these intellectual defects may be occasioned by intellectual inactivity, through passion, or an excessive confidence in the teachings of others. All that we assert is, that, in case the conscience should be applied to these general relations of duty, its judgments would be infallible. The truths which it discerns and assents to are in their nature as clear and as self-evident as are the postulates and axioms of geometry. This may also be true of some of the relations of the intentions to external action. But the number of these relations is limited. In respect to very many, not to say the most of these, inasmuch as they change with circumstances, the relations not being constant, and the evidence being probable and inductive, conscience has no warrant for infallible or even for uniform decisions.

It follows, that conscience as the intellect is the subject of various degrees of certainty in its judgments. Conscience is absolutely certain, prevailingly persuaded, doubtful and vacillating. The importance of the questions, and the immense desirableness of clear insight and positive convictions, furnish no security against erroneous or doubtful judgments in those cases in which error and doubt are possible. Similarly, in judging of our actual intentions and doings in the light of an accepted standard, — i.e., in estimating our character and conduct by an acknowledged rule of duty, — there is a still wider opportunity for doubt and uncertainty in the decisions of conscience. It is one thing to be certain of the law of duty, and altogether another to know whether, in will or act, we actually conform to this law. Intellectual difficulties and moral biases may both interfere with satisfactory conclusions. No judgments of this class can be of the nature of

scientific axioms or logical inferences. And yet, practically, many of them may be altogether satisfactory and sufficient. In cases of exposure to serious error or uncertainty, the assurance or hope of spiritual guidance and help which may direct the intellect and quicken the sensibilities is most reasonable and assuring.

§ 109. (b) Conscience, as sensibility, follows the laws of the emotions. The feelings invariably follow the judgments, whether they are right or wrong. **Conscience as sensibility.** Whatever may be the judgment of conscience as the intellect, in respect either to the rule of duty or its application, whether this judgment be right or wrong, the emotion which follows will be appropriate to this judgment, but not necessarily appropriate to the truth. If the man has adopted an erroneous or defective rule, and condemns or acquits himself when tried by that rule, the sentence of approval or disapproval will follow this judgment. If a man believes he ought to perform a special act of service to God, or to his neighbor, or to himself, and performs that service, he approves himself all the same, whether the act be righteous, or a palpable violation of duty. On the other hand, if he violates what he thinks to be his duty in any of these relations, by doing what in fact is the right thing to be done, yet, if he believes the act to be wrong, he condemns himself all the same. The mistaken devotee, the misguided fanatic, the unreasoning philanthropist, the headstrong child, parent, husband and wife, the self-torturing ascetic, the philosophical libertine, experience all the emotions which they ought to feel, provided their judgments were right, although every one of these judgments happens to be wrong.

The simple experience of self-approbation or reproach of conscience after an act, or of scruples or confidence before, proves nothing in respect to the correctness or incorrectness of the judgments which occasion these emotions, except so far as these feelings betray a secret **Emotional experiences on decision.**

conviction that these judgments ought to have been different, and were themselves dishonestly made. What are called the scruples of conscience, the reproaches of conscience, or the satisfaction of conscience, usually include the intellectual judgments and the sense of certain biasing influences in the formation of the conclusions, as truly as they do the emotions which follow them. In simple emotion, there is and there can be no guidance except as emotion indicates a concealed suspicion or judgment in a disobedient and dishonest mind.

§ 110. (c) Conscience, both as intellect and sensibility, can be cultivated and developed. Even the original capacity to discern those moral relations that are self-evident can be made more quick and serviceable by honest and frequent use, and certainly the habit of recalling these primal relations to our thoughts is matured by constant exercise. Those judgments which are probable and inductive, being founded on experience, are obviously dependent on the general cultivation of the intellect, and its special training in discerning moral relations. If conscience is only another name for the special activities of the man, and if the intellect is capable of culture, development, and progress, then conscience as intellect is capable of making progress in its powers and habits, and of giving proof of this progress by an improved moral standard. This must also be true of the individual and the public conscience, so far as a community can be said to have a conscience.

Conscience as feeling can also be cultivated and improved. The capacity for feeling of every description increases by exercise. The constant use of the moral emotions enlarges and makes more sensitive the sensibilities. What is of equal consequence, the habit of connecting the responsive emotions quickly and surely with each intellectual judgment is only attained by constant exercise, and the removal of every adverse influence. When conscience as sensibility is perfected in the service of

duty, its courage may become as stern and hard as an armor of mail, and its sensitiveness as delicate as the blush of a woman.

But conscience, whether it be intellect or sensibility, is in no sense the product or creature of culture or education. It is as natural and as necessary to man to discern the relations of duty as it is to discern the relations of number, and to feel morally as it is to feel hunger and thirst.

§ 111. (*d*) As conscience can be cultivated and enlightened, so it can be debased and darkened. By neglect or misuse its self-evident truths can be overlooked or forgotten, its inductive and probable conclusions can fail to be reached, and even those which are false or one-sided can be accepted in their place. The worse may habitually be put for the better judgment, and the most sensitive feelings may be brought into the service of a sophistical and shallow moral code. To a fearful, but not to an unlimited extent, it can put darkness for light, and light for darkness. By disuse and corruption the conscience can be "seared as with a hot iron;" and by perversion the source of purity can itself be defiled with depraved associations.

Can be debased and darkened.

But, with all its capacities for degeneracy and debasement, the conscience can never be destroyed. The original power to discern ultimate and axiomatic moral truth remains unimpaired, so soon as biasing and perverting influences are removed, and perverted habits of reasoning or debasing habits of feeling can be renounced and overcome (cf. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Aids to Reflection, Moral and Religious Aphorisms*, xlv.).

Cannot be destroyed.

The disadvantages are so serious, however, under which this work of restoring and reforming the conscience is prosecuted, as to furnish occasion for every possible auxiliary. Prominent among such influences, and practically indispensable, are the influences of religion, with its positive instructions uttered by divine authority to direct and

Reformed under disadvantages.

strengthen the intellect ; with its peculiar motives to affect the heart ; with its transcendent example and embodiment of condescension and love ; and those special aids which conspire with or against the unconscious operations of the soul, to break and recast the subtile bonds of association and habit.

The independence and supremacy of conscience have often been pushed so far as to remove it beyond the reach of extraneous influences for good or for evil. It has been argued, that if conscience is independent as a judge, and finds in itself a complete autonomy, then it is lifted above the need of instruction, the reach of authority, the danger of debasement, and the possibility of any other than self-recovery. Such a theory of conscience is inconsistent with our speculative or practical knowledge of man in all the relations of life.

§ 112. In one sense, conscience has supreme authority. “ Had it strength as it has right, had it power as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world ” (BISHOP BUTLER, *Diss.*, II.). All that can be intended by this saying is, that all men consent that it is fitting that the judgments and motives of conscience should be obeyed. Its pains and pleasures are in their nature more important than any and all others besides. Whatever a man knows to be right, by that very fact he accepts as the controlling law of his active energies, supreme over himself and all moral beings. But conscience is not therefore infallible. In some of its judgments it cannot be mistaken, and these it confidently imposes on all moral beings. Other of its conclusions are only probable. But for every one who receives them, these are supreme ; being morally binding upon him, but not necessarily upon others. They are not, however, final, even for him. He may renew these judgments, and annul the obligations which they impose. But, so long as the judgments are retained, the obligations to obey them are complete and supreme. In this sense, and to this extent, *conscience is the supreme and ultimate tribunal.*

§ 113. The question is often asked, *whether a man is always right in obeying his conscience.* To answer this question satisfactorily, we must keep in mind the different senses in which the word "right" is used, as these senses have been already defined (§ 85).

Should
conscience
always be
obeyed?

If we mean by the question, Does a man always do that which is relatively right when he obeys his conscience? that is, Does he always perform the external action which is right under the circumstances? we reply, *By no means.* The decision of his conscience that such an action is right may be wholly mistaken. But if the question is, Does a man err if he follows the judgment or command of his conscience as to what should be the controlling purpose of his will? we answer, He cannot possibly be in the wrong in respect to such a judgment or such an act. So soon, however, as the question respects the manifestation or execution of the intent in specific actions, the possibility of occasional or of frequent errors must be conceded, with a few comprehensive exceptions.

Conscience is often spoken of as the voice or oracle of God, as a divine genius, an unerring director, etc., in terms which represent it as an infallible ruler and guide. Language like this may not mislead when the comprehensive rules of duty which respect the inner man are in question. They may not when those actions are considered which justify themselves to the rapid but sure inductions of common-sense under the common conditions of life. In respect to all such questions, we may say with truth and with confidence, that the honest conscience may trust itself, especially when its motives are purified by prayer, and its judgments are made self-suspecting by reverent thoughts of God. But, to find in every judgment of duty which we accept for ourselves an infallible rule of duty which we may impose on our fellow-men, is to lose sight of our human limitations, and often to part with both moderation and modesty. The claim of infallibility for what may be our defective or misjudged opinions is usually

Figuratively
character-
ized.

attended by the tyrannical and presumptuous impulse to enforce these opinions on our fellow-men. Among the many outrages which have been perpetrated in the name of conscience, none surpasses this of setting up the narrow or hasty judgments of an individual or a community as the eternal and authorized rule of duty for all mankind. In such cases the ignorance of the fundamental principles of moral truth is only surpassed by the arrogance with which these rash conclusions are imposed upon others. Nothing is so well fitted to bring into suspicion and contempt the sacred authority of this supreme arbiter as such extravagant and unqualified claims of authority for the individual conscience upon every question of duty which may arise.

§ 114. *Is a man ever justified in acting against his conscience?*

May it ever be disobeyed? If this question means, Would a man ever perform a right action outwardly, should he act in a manner diverse from that prescribed by his conscience? we answer, Unquestionably he would. A physician who has an incorrect theory of medicine, or who has made an imperfect diagnosis of the condition of his patient, may verily think that he ought to give as medicine that which is death to the victim of his ignorance or his blunder. Similarly, there is nothing which will necessarily secure a man from adopting mistaken conclusions as to what he ought to do for himself, his family, his friends, his country, or his religion. Whoever follows his conscience, thus misjudging or misinformed, will in every case, in external action, do that which is completely wrong.

But if the question means, Is a man ever *morally justified* in disobeying his conscience? we answer unhesitatingly: No,—not even though in disobeying his conscience he should happen to perform an action which externally and relatively is wholly right. But for him to perform such an action, with his views of its nature, would be wholly wrong. The first step for him to take towards complete rectitude is to correct his conscience, i.e., to form a well-grounded judgment of the nature of the acts in question. Afterwards he may follow this corrected con-

science in the actions to which it will direct, and which may be presumed to be both absolutely and relatively right.

§ 115. Besides the mistaken, there is the *perverted* or *dishonest* conscience. In the cases already supposed, the man is in error, and yet free from guilt. If his knowledge of the facts or relations which should determine his judgment is limited or erroneous by no fault of

The per-
verted and
dishonest
conscience.

his own, then he is wholly guiltless, though his conscience is misled. But if he suspects he may be in the wrong, and still yields to sophistical reasonings which he cannot wholly refute, or to the imperfect or false information which he persuades himself to believe, his conscience is popularly said to be *perverted*. He is not wholly guilty for his erroneous conscience, while yet the bias or perversion of his conscience is more or less his fault. It seems a paradox to say that a man knows better than to think, feel, or act as he does, and yet that he follows his conscience. The paradox can be explained only by distinguishing two modes of knowledge as possible to the same person, — the direct and reflective; or, better perhaps, the unformulated and the formulated. In the line of explicit statement or formal deduction, the conclusion which is accepted seems to be unavoidable; the premises seem plausible, almost self-evident; they are also enforced by high authority: and yet the inferences which they justify and compel offend the prevailing convictions of the man. If, now, these conclusions are also enforced by his strong wishes, or by some biasing influence of association, habit, or tradition, it is likely that the erroneous logic will prevail, and the man will reason himself into what he calls a conscientious belief; although it contradicts his enlightened suspicions or his better judgment.

The methods or devices by which a man may mislead his conscience are manifold. A true principle is adopted, as, it is wrong to encourage communism, — which may or may not apply to the act in question, — or, to break any other rule or principle which has been accepted as

Methods by
which it is
misled.

self-evident or unquestioned. The force of such a major premise is carried violently over to the minor and the conclusion. Or the principle is generally but not invariably true; as, to give relief to a street-beggar is always wrong. Prejudice (literally a pre-judgment) decides beforehand that all men of a given party or sect or nationality are of course to be suspected or rejected as witnesses and reasoners, and the sweep and force of this logic is wide-reaching and resistless when enforced and accepted by partisan excitement or dishonest dogmatism. Men of usually sound judgment and honest intentions sometimes are induced to accept conclusions to which the logic of reason and candor gives a feeble support. Representations which favor the conclusions which we desire to justify are welcomed with a ready and liberal confidence, while the opposing testimony is set aside with distrust.

§ 116. In every case of a perverted conscience, there is a real or imagined discrepancy between the prevailing beliefs and the so-called conscientious conclusions. This discrepancy is not usually, it may never be, distinctly recognized; but it must be more or less distinctly suspected. Were the man fully satisfied with himself, he might be in error, but his conscience could not be perverted. The ground of steadfast and sturdy adherence to the conclusions of the perverted conscience is strong desire, confirmed by logical reasonings from insufficient or uncertain data. This is specially manifest when the conscience is made to favor cruel and selfish passion, pre-eminently if the passion is sanctioned by the supposed favor of the Deity. At first thought it would seem to be the strangest of all the strange manifestations of human passion, that no hatreds are so malignant as those which are conceived to justify religious persecution, and no cruelties have been so relentless as those which were supposed to be required by conscience and by God. On second thought it is not so singular, if we reflect that in such cases the two most potent impulses are awakened that can move a human

Possible
discrepancy
between the
real and
fictitious
conscience.

being, — malignant passion, and the fear of God ; God being believed to sanction the passions of envy and hate.

§ 117. In view of the imperfections of conscience, and its failures as an infallible guide ; especially in view of its special exposures to the biasing influences of feeling, and the sophistical perplexities of logic, — the rule has not infrequently been laid down, that in doubtful questions of duty it is safer and wiser not to reason at all. Some go so far as to advise, without qualification, “ It is better to trust the feelings than arguments. In questions of duty it is wiser and safer to follow the impulses of sentiment, rather than the conclusions of logic.”

Is it ever best
not to reason,
and when ?

“ And puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few:
These find I graven on my heart:
That tells me what to do.”

WORDSWORTH: *Rob Roy's Grave.*

In one interpretation, this rule is intellectually sound and practically wise. If a man cannot master the relations involved in a question of duty, or a case of conscience, so as to reason clearly and wisely in respect to either, it were better to rest in a decision without attempting to construct an argument. For many persons it is doubtless true, that to debate a question is to lose your cause. To parley with an antagonist who tempts you to a doubtful indulgence, is to be lost. Better a thousand times, because it is a thousand times safer, to follow the course which commends itself to a sound and practical judgment, than to trust your decision and yourself to the chances of a formulated induction or an articulated syllogism to which you are incompetent. This rule is no more true and wise in morals, however, than it is in other departments of intellectual activity. The majority of the inductions which control the opinions and decide the interests of mankind are made by men who are incapable of stating or defending the logic of the processes which they implicitly trust. But it does not follow, because these

processes cannot be analyzed or formulated by the men who perform and trust them, that they are incapable of analysis and justification. Least of all does it follow, that in these doubtful cases, or in any case, the feelings may come in, and usurp the prerogatives of the intellect, and displace its activities. In every case of the kind, it is the intellect which must decide, and not the feelings. To trust to the feelings alone in disputed or perplexed questions of duty, is unsound in theory, and unsafe if not fanatical in practice. The feelings are always impulsive and blind, except as they are guided by the intellect, or are used by the intellect as data from which it may derive rational conclusions. What are called the unconquerable feelings, the irresistible emotions, or the all-powerful sentiments, are in fact rational convictions glowing with warm emotion, rapid inductions which the mind can not or will not analyze, or comprehensive generalizations unconsciously gathered from many sagacious observations.

It follows, that the truly conscientious man will always hear reasons and give reasons in respect to his beliefs and his actions. He is always ready to revise his opinions on the semblance of a reason. He is never afraid to consider a new truth, nor to view an old truth in a new light, but seeks illumination from every quarter. The wilfully blind, the doggedly obstinate, the passionately intolerant, the mulishly persistent, in respect to those opinions of duty which they have blindly inherited or adopted as partisans, are greatly deficient in the characteristic signs of a conscientious spirit.

On the other hand, the disciplined conscience has gained by its manifold inductions a species of tact which is akin to intuition. The sensitiveness of its ethical emotions has been matured to a corresponding delicacy. Its judgments, like those of an accomplished artisan, artist, critic, or physician, do not need to be analyzed into their grounds to be justified to the intellect. Its feelings follow the conclusions so quickly as to seem to form a part of their substance.

The intuitive
tact of con-
science.

That is a fitting arrangement in the moral economy which rewards implicit obedience to the law of duty by this subtile power to interpret its meaning in trying and difficult cases, and suffers those who are false to their moral convictions to become incapable of holding any convictions except that moral relations are untrustworthy. There is a profound philosophy in the words, “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light: but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

CHAPTER XVII.

CASES OF CONSCIENCE, CASUISTRY, CONFLICT OF DUTIES,
AND TOLERATION.

§ 118. CASES of conscience are doubtful or disputed questions of duty, which present themselves for adjudication, either to the earnest inquirer, the friendly arbiter, or the spiritual guide. These inquiries respect some act of duty in regard to which the inquirer is supposed to be in doubt,—either to some act as yet not performed, concerning which the question of its obligation is undecided; or some act in the past, for which repentance or reparation is possibly due. The difficulty arises from the apparently conflicting claims of two or more incompatible actions, each of which, under other circumstances, would be a duty, and both of which, very frequently, have the semblance and authority of moral obligation. As, for example, duty to a parent may seem to conflict with duty to a child; duty to oneself, with the claim of a beloved and honored relative or friend; duty to country, with duty to God. We say, seem to conflict: for, as we have contended, an actual conflict of duties is impossible; it being obvious that the duty which we decide to be supreme is, in the given case, the only act which can be acknowledged as binding, while yet the claim and the sacredness of what might otherwise be a duty seems not wholly set aside and extinguished by the authority of its apparent superior.

The mastery of the principles or rules proper to decide these cases of conscience often becomes a discipline or profession by itself, and has been made a special study whenever men have formally undertaken the direction of the conscience, as spiritual advisers or confessors, or friendly or legal arbiters. The strong and pertinacious desires of multitudes to resort to a directory of this sort would give evidence, were there no other, that earnest men are very often perplexed by difficulties over such questions.

These conflicts respecting the duties and rights of men assume great importance when the claims of opposing parties are urged upon guardians,

trustees, etc., or any person who acts in a fiduciary relation, or when legal or at least equitable demands are urged from diverse parties, on moral grounds, or grounds partially moral and partially jural. That there is occasion for a brief discussion of this topic, is manifest from these and other considerations. All that we can undertake is to refer to the ethical principles which we have already settled, and to show their application to the cases and questions described.

When especially needful.

§ 119. In adjusting the claims of what we have called conflicting duties, we should never forget, that, *in foro conscientie*, duty properly and primarily pertains to the voluntary desire. Its subject-matter is wholly psychological. What a man should prefer, or voluntarily wish, in a most important spiritual and real sense, exhausts the matter of his duty in its most imperative relations. Next, it is equally true, that, whenever a voluntary purpose or desire impels to a definite expression or action, this external act is as truly and as sacredly a duty as the inner purpose. Whenever, also, only one of two external acts can be performed, two only being possible, it is one's duty to decide, from the highest evidence attainable, which of the two should be performed. It will not meet the case to say, The intention is the supreme ethical good, and I will be content with that. It will not satisfy the conscience to say, or to reason, The intention alone has moral quality; and therefore I will stop with the intention, and so waive obedience to the impulse to action. The right volition is always a volition to act if an action is possible; that is, it is a preferred impulse, and it waits only to know how to act it out, or what to do. The only question which it asks, or cares to determine, is, What shall I do in order to effect the obligatory desire? If, now, several acts claim the preference, on what ground can I adjust these conflicting claims? Only on the ground of the superior fitness of one to effect more completely the common object to which all duty tends, and to reach which every duty is performed. This is the sole question which can possibly remain to be decided or adjusted. The question of superior claims, though it concerns the moral obligation or preferability of actions, turns altogether upon the question of their fitness as related to that end which, it is acknowledged, every action aims to accomplish, and by which aim it becomes morally good or evil.

Moral quality properly limited to the purposes.

§ 120. It has been already proved (§ 76), that, in framing rules for the external actions, we only assume of a limited class of such actions that they ought always to be performed, i.e., whenever there is an occasion for them; and that, when such occasion arises, no question can possibly arise, and no other pretended duty can take their place. It is observed, that, in regard to actions of this sort, a case of conscience can never arise, the duties being always obligatory. Inasmuch as one duty can never yield to the claims of

Certain actions never admit of question.

any other duty, there can be no conflict whatever. The obligation to the external action is as real and as uncompromising as the obligation to any internal purpose or affection. Such cases, say a deed of open homage to God, can never come into conflict with any other claim, and, therefore, can never furnish the material for a case of conscience. It is only when two acts, both being obligatory at times, and both apparently able to urge their rival reasons drawn from some good which will attend upon each, — it is only then that any question involving a conflict of duties can possibly arise. Take an example: Shall duty to one child, with its special claims for urgent practical help, take precedence of duty to another child, with its extraordinary appeals to the sympathy of the parent? Shall I give largely to an object of individual or family or social culture, or to some commanding patriotic or Christian interest? Shall I, for the sake of some urgent good, offend the taste and shock the conscience of my neighbor, or run counter to the moral feelings of the community in which I live? Shall I do what, in ordinary cases, would rightfully be called a deed of cruelty to parent or friend, in order to save the life of another person?

It has already been said, that if the act in question is always, under all circumstances, obligatory, or always criminal, the question is settled once for all: it must always be performed or avoided, let whatever other supposed duty interfere. If it is not an act of this kind, then it must be settled by such reasons as should influence the decision of any question of external action, — whether prudence, taste, or personal feelings, casual or permanent associations, near or remote consequences. The question is one of the effects of the two actions, of the actual good which will probably follow, using good in the widest possible sense. It does not concern the intention on the part of the doer. Concerning that, there is no possible question, and there can be no conflict. It relates to the result in the largest sense, whether it is more or less beneficent or harmful.

§ 121. This narrows the question to the inquiry whether the occasion

**When cases
of conscience
become
serious.**

can arise, that those current maxims which, with rare exceptions, rule mankind, should ever be broken, and the hallowed associations that are connected with certain overt actions should ever be violated. This involves another question, whether feeling or judgment should rule; to which there

can be but one answer. The cases of the conflict of duties, which are often of serious interest, are such as arise out of what are properly called the natural or legal rights, as determined by venerable customs and traditional law, when one act or both is in conflict with what seem to be the dictates of ethical justice and natural conscience; as in the distribution of property by the accident of relationship, or the caprice of weakness, or the crimes of wickedness. In such cases, men easily cry out against the conflict between what they call righteousness on the one hand, and law on the other; and imagine that in the present evil world, as they call it, or in this disordered

and exceptional province of the moral universe, a perpetual conflict has been ordained of nature and of God, between these two forces, which it is impossible to adjust, however much it may be desired. They might much more reasonably explain such conflicts by the wholesome ethical discipline which attends every phase of human life, under which the ideal is perpetually contrasted with the real; the best men, the best deeds, and the best aspirations are misunderstood; the best plans are imperfectly realized, and the noblest sacrifices are disappointed. It should also be remembered, that, in morals, the ideal is in every one's power; and hence the obligation to noble aims and pure aspirations is never abated. Mistakes and failures in the manifestations of what we desire and perform are the consequences of other limitations than the moral. They do not always follow moral imperfection, though they often may. The incidents of earthly discipline, and even the mistaken doings and enterprises of the noblest men, may turn out to be more salutary to themselves, and better for the world, than their wiser judgments or their more consistent and useful external actions.

§ 122. Questions of casuistry being never questions concerning the purposes, but always questions concerning the effects, of our actions, afford abundant opportunity for diversity of opinions, with equal honesty of mind. In regard to many questions of duty, men not only may, but must, differ in opinion; it being presumed that they also differ in their range of information, their quickness of thought, their accuracy of memory, and their sensitiveness of feeling. Two men, equally honest, may "look at opposite sides of the shield," or view a landscape from different points of view, and, if they do, must see different objects.

Casuistry is concerned with the effects of actions.

It follows, that, in forming opinions for themselves concerning doubtful or contested questions of duty, men should be cautious, patient, and docile, and ready to hear both sides. In deciding such questions for others, they should be eminently impartial and unprejudiced. In judging of the decisions made by others, they should be studiously dispassionate and charitable.

Temper in which such questions should be prosecuted.

No opinions are more likely to be called in question with a passionate earnestness than the opinions which are formed by our fellow-men in regard to any disputed question of duties or rights in which they have a personal interest or a partisan sympathy. The importance that the decision should be right because of the interest or the solemnity of the duty which is involved, and the sensitive apprehension that unfaithfulness or error may occur, all seem to justify the warmth and earnestness with which men espouse one side or the other of a doubtful or disputed question. Hence the special temptations to partisanship in respect to disputed questions in religion or politics, or social or individual claims to rights or privileges. The importance of the interest with which the controversy has to

do, the number and apparent strength of the reasons which can be given for any opinion, the skill and eloquence and wit with which any conclusion can be urged, all furnish the means and the temptation for a partisan bias, in which the personal integrity is liable to suffer, and the worst cause to receive undeserved support.

Not a few ethical teachers and ghostly advisers enjoin no duty so earnestly and fervently as the duty of a blind and intolerant zeal of assertion and action, in any cause to which they are devoted. Perhaps no duty needs to be more earnestly inculcated than the duty of fairness of mind in forming opinions in respect to disputed questions in practical morals, these being viewed in their widest range as embracing the entire range of social as well as individual actions.

§ 123. The duty of *tolerance* in respect to those opinions of other men

**Tolerance
defined.**

which we reject for ourselves is also of prime importance.

It is simply the duty of charitably interpreting the considerations that occupy their minds, thus putting ourselves in their place. The duty is enjoined by that simple justice which requires us to bethink ourselves of the readiness with which men may occupy their minds with only one side of an argument. Tolerance also is the only condition of successful discussion and fruitful controversy. It, and it alone, secures the fairness of statement, the courtesy of criticism, the mildness of retort, the responsive sympathy, the inextinguishable sense of justice, which prompt the most unjust of men to decide for the right, when justice alone is appealed to, provided their passions or partisanship be not aroused.

Dogmatism and browbeating in assertion and reply, and simple effrontery in maintaining our opinion when silenced or repelled, are, in the supreme sense, immoral and demoralizing, as well as in fearfully bad taste, for any man who professes to reason or to think.

To the beneficent effect of tolerance, however, it is essential that it

**Limited
to what
questions.**

should be limited to those points in respect to which it is

conceded that a disputed question of duty can arise. For a

man who denies duty altogether to ask for tolerance or chari-

table judgment in respect to whether this or that action

should hold or yield the field when the two come in conflict, seems a simple contradiction of terms. To such a claim, the only possible response is found in the position that the two disputants cannot discuss questions concerning relations in which the one party believes and which the other denies. Hence the axioms of conscience should always be asserted by those who believe them with no stint of earnestness, with no abatement of fervor, and no cowardice in personal appeal. The commanding duties, also, to which every man is supposed to assent, the wakeful truths which never slumber, are always to be affirmed with confidence and zeal by every man who would do justice to his convictions or be true to his conscience.

No mistake can be so serious, though none may be more frequently made, than to confound the duty of tolerating differences of opinion in respect to doubtful questions of duty, with the duty of earnestly expressing a positive faith in fundamental moral distinctions, and a positive dissent from the denial of such distinctions. But these distinctions concern the intentions and purposes, and the great moralities of action which are assumed to be the uniform and necessary manifestations of such purposes. It is only in respect to doubtful questions respecting external actions, that tolerance is possible or is called for.

This duty of tolerance is grounded on the clear conviction that men are likely to differ in opinion in respect to the right and wrong of actions as the expressions of the inner purposes; and, for this reason, they ought to respect the liberty of one another in such differences, whether these respect practical and personal ethics, or public and political partisanship.

Tolerance and *toleration* have also a technical significance when applied to the attitude of a government, in respect to opinions which are deemed incompatible with such religious or political or ethical doctrines as are deemed dangerous to the political future of either state or church or school, or injurious to the morals of the citizens. Thus applied, toleration signifies abstinence from judicial interference with the propagation of such doctrines, and also from social persecution. Such toleration is urged on grounds of duty or expediency, one or both. It need not be said that tolerance, in this sense, has grown very slowly, and is very far from being matured or perfected.

**Toleration,
in its special
meaning.**

The wisdom and duty of toleration, as thus conceived, should never be abused in any way to the sanction of practical indifference to moral truth, or to the denial of personal responsibility in asserting one's convictions, not only in respect to the fundamental principles of ethical truth, but, also, in respect to their applications in many cases where men seriously differ. Earnestness and zeal and courage, in the assertion of ethical convictions, is often misnamed "intolerance." Taken in this sense, the truth has great significance, that "the only true spirit of tolerance consists in our conscientious toleration of each other's intolerance. Whatever pretends to more than this is either the unthinking cant of fashion, or the soul-falsifying narcotic of moral or religious indifference." — COLERIDGE, *The Friend*, Essay xiii.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN THEORY OF MORALS.

§ 124. WE limit our discussion to the theory of morals which we find in the New Testament. Our concern with this theory is speculative only. it is speculative. We do not emphasize, although we do not overlook, the practical elevation and purity of many of its special rules of feeling and

conduct, inasmuch as these are generally acknowledged. All considerate men are unanimous in the opinion, that the Christian morality as a practical code was singularly elevated and pure for its time, and that the general spirit of its teachings in respect to unselfishness and unworldliness, temperance and unfleshliness, meekness and forgiveness, has never been surpassed, either by an earlier or a later single teacher or school of teachers.

From a naturalistic point of view. We do not, in our argument, assume supernatural authority for the Master of its school, nor ask any favorable judgment for his teachings from his presumed divine authority or his winning graciousness of spirit. We take the Christian system as we find it, and compare it with the other theories which preceded and followed it, simply in respect to its theoretic merits, as tried by the ordinary tests of any speculative theory of practical duties. These are, logical consistency, harmony with the nature of man, and a capacity for adjustment to the varying needs of individuals, and the possible or probable growth and development of human society. We do not forget that Christianity is on its face

conspicuously a religious system, and derives its motives and finds its authority in an historic personage; but we contend that the teachings, the example, and the sanctions of this personage are also distinctively and sharply ethical. Nor do we deny that these ethical teachings and motives are presented in a form which is eminently unscholastic and informal. But we contend none the less, that these teachings and motives embody and enforce a speculative system which can be definitely formulated, and which, as speculatively wise and practically useful and trustworthy, is adequate to all the possible exigencies of the future. These principles when studied in the light of other theories, and re-phrased and re-stated in the language of the schools, constitute the comprehensive and fundamental truths of a definite system.

It is no less ethical because religious.

Not scholastic, but popular.

It should not be forgotten, however, that any system of ethics must necessarily be limited in respect to the certainty and positiveness and range of its teachings. Its fundamental principles and its positive rules are necessarily but few. These may be said to be axiomatic and self-evident. The most of its special rules must be probable in their authority, and admit of exceptions in their application. These points have been abundantly established in our previous discussions. In view of these principles, it would seem, that, if the Christian system of ethics is adapted for man, we ought not to expect to find in it any authority or completeness which would take it out of the range of human adaptations. Its very uncertainty and indefiniteness, its flexible and progressive character, may be arguments for its human excellence; inasmuch as they prove its more complete fitness for individual and social needs, and its restrictions of the human ideal to that which is necessarily variable and progressive. We also premise, once for all, that we do not sharply contrast the New Testament with the Old, or the Christian with the Hebrew ethics. We shall in our discussion treat the two as one, and the Christian as the consummation of the Hebrew

system, reserving some explanation as to the possibility of progress and development in both (§§ 142. 143).

§ 125. (1) The first principle which we notice is, that right and wrong are affirmed of the purpose or intention. “Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment” (Matt. v. 22). “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer” (1 John iii. 15). “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. v. 28).

§ 126. (2) Moral distinctions pertain to the intentions as expressing the character. “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh” (Luke vi. 45). “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing” (1 Cor. xiii. 3). “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (Jas. ii. 10).

§ 127. (3) A good purpose, proceeding from a good character, will be manifested in good actions. “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. . . . Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? . . . For as the body withoutt he spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (Jas. ii. 15, 16, 22, 24). “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity” (Matt. vii. 23).

Hence no conflict is recognized as possible between a good intention with virtuous affections, and good actions. The one

will necessarily and inevitably manifest itself by the other. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart certainly and necessarily bringeth forth good things. Contrariwise, good deeds without the intention, the affection, the honest heart, are morally worthless. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, . . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 3). "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Matt. xv. 19).

§ 128. (4) Moral distinctions are not originated by the divine statute, but are founded on the nature of man. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts; their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Rom. ii. 14, 15). "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Luke xii. 57.)

Not originated by the divine command.

§ 129. (5) The moral law taught by nature is re-enforced by the primal authority of God. This truth will not be questioned by any man who reads the New Testament. It abounds in commands and threatenings, uttered in the name of God, as supreme motives to right feeling and action. It were useless to cite distinct declarations of this import and to this effect. In the variety of these commands, and the freedom and positiveness with which they are reiterated, not the slightest suspicion is betrayed that the ethical obligation imposed by conscience is weakened or divided by the authority of the divine command or its promised rewards and threatened punishments. The apparent paradox is boldly accepted and indorsed in the comprehensive precept, "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect"

Though re-enforced by it.

(Matt. v. 48). “He that in these things *serveth Christ* is *acceptable to God, and approved of men*” (Rom. xiv. 18).

§ 130. (6) The principle is implied, that there need be no inconsistency between the appeal to conscience by ethical motives, and the appeal to the natural desire of well-being or happiness. This doctrine has been most earnestly controverted, by many able ethical writers. The unquestioned fact that Christianity makes and sanctions such an appeal has been made the ground of objection to its divine origin and its permanent authority. Its assailants have urged the following in a manifold variety and plausibility of phraseology: Virtue, to be genuine, must be disinterested; i.e., it must be loved for its own sake. If it is loved for its own sake, any motives superadded must be either superfluous or mercenary. If I am moved by a genuine love for moral excellence, the fact that God commands me to choose, and will reward or punish me for obedience or the contrary, can add no force to these supreme attractions, or whatever force it adds must be either corrupting, inferior, or superfluous¹ (§§ 129, 130). It was with reference to this question, that Butler discussed the relation of the desire of happiness, or what is called self-love, to ethical motives. These objections and difficulties can only be successfully set aside by the satisfactory adjustment of the question. It is not enough, however, to show that no conflict ought to exist between man’s susceptibility to moral relations, and his natural desire of well-being in any and every form (§ 67). It should also be contended, that, while religious motives superadded are not inconsistent with the ethical, they are personal, and therefore additional in their force. Inasmuch also as religious relations and susceptibilities crown and complete the nature of man, a completed morality should both require, and respond to, a religion which recognizes and enforces these personal influences.¹

¹ *Critique of Practical Reason*. F. P. COBBE, *Intuitive Morals*: London and Boston; *Religious Duty*: London.

Kant, as is well known, takes the most positive ground against any appeal to this desire of happiness as unethical, and declares in the strongest terms that any use of motives addressed to the sensibilities is intolerable. And yet he contends that the conviction that happiness is the fit reward of virtue is itself a moral imperative, which requires and justifies the belief in God as a moral ruler, and administrator of reward and punishment.

Many of the modern rejecters of Christianity, and not a few of its professed defenders, repeat this fundamental position, and apply it with a more complete consistency than Kant; rejecting with a kind of ethical disdain, or a ferocity of pride, the need of any influences from hope or fear of the favor or displeasure of a personal Deity.¹

Whatever may be thought of the soundness and elevation of the principle itself, the fact cannot be denied that the Christian ethics not only recognize but enforce the moral propriety of rewards and threatenings, as an incitement to virtue and a deterrent from vice.

It is equally manifest, that the style of virtue which Christianity proposes for man's adoption, and enforces by these motives, is the most thorough-going in its unselfishness, and the most disinterested in its spirit, of any ideal virtue that has ever been conceived by man. Whatever may be thought of the speculative inconsistency between the loftiness of its ideal, and the alleged interestedness of the motives by which it is enforced, it cannot be denied that the two are intimately conjoined, and earnestly enforced in the system itself.

Thoroughly
unselfish.

Ethical and
personal mo-
tives capable
of being
harmonized.

There are those who find in the confident assurance with which Christianity recognizes and employs both classes of motives, the ethical and the so-called pathet-

¹ J. G. Fichte affirms, "Jede Handlung aus Hoffnung des Lohnes oder Furcht der Strafe ist absolut unmoralisch;" and Schleiermacher, "Furcht und Hoffnung sind selbst sinnliche Motive und diese sollen ja edler bekämpft werden. Sie sind gewaltige Kräfte aber unsittliche."

matic and personal, and the energy with which it enforces each, an incidental proof of its profound sagacity, as, also, of the intrinsic truthfulness of the ethical system itself. Possibly this apparent paradox may be an evidence that the system which enforces both is the product of supernatural wisdom.

“But it would, at the least, seem evident that the Scriptures recognize fully that happiness is not merely the desire of mankind, but the legitimate desire. All their commandments are ‘commandments with promise,’ expressed or implied; and their religion is a religion of personal gratitude and hope. One of their most characteristic words is . . . the word ‘blessed.’ Blessedness, indeed, may be distinguished from happiness, but only as expressing a higher degree or kind of it; and, for the purposes of the present argument, the distinction is unimportant. The keynote of the Psalms is struck in the first verse, ‘Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.’ But the teaching of our Lord is the most conspicuous of all examples of this characteristic. The service or the results which are recognized as the embodiment of his moral teaching are based, from beginning to end, on this principle. It commences with a series of beatitudes; it ends with the assurance that the observance of his words will be followed by permanent security: ‘Whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock.’ The keynote of Christ’s morality is blessing. He is the greatest of all preachers of self-sacrifice. But how does he recommend it? ‘He that saveth his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel’s, *the same shall save it.*’ These are the very words which command self-sacrifice, and yet they sanction the instinct of self-preservation. It would be difficult to name a single passage from the gospel, in which self-sacrifice is recommended, without reference to an ultimate blessing as the result; and such, at all events, must have been the impression left on the mind of the apostle, who commences his epistle with the words, ‘These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.’” — *Christianity and Morality*, by HENRY D. WACE, D.D., 1877; pp 24, 25.

§ 131. (7) Another principle of Christian ethics, which deserves notice, is the doctrine that benevolence, or moral love, comprehends and enforces every duty which man owes to his fellow-man (§ 206). No single principle is asserted in terms that are at once so philosophical in form and unequivocal in their import as the following: “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another;

**Benevolence
comprehends
all duties
from man
to man.**

for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 8-10).

No question has been more earnestly debated, in the schools of speculative morality, than the question whether benevolence includes and enforces all the special duties which man owes to his fellow-man. Some have contended, that though the obligations of justice, veracity, and gratitude may be re-enforced by the general duty of benevolence, yet they are enforced originally by other and independent grounds of authority. The teachings of Christianity upon this point seem to be unequivocal and decisive. First, benevolence is distinctly recognized as comprehending and enforcing all the duties which man owes to man. "This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*" (Matt. xxii. 38, 39). "If there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended" — i.e., generalized and provided for — under this saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 9, 10). Second, the duties of justice and truth are distinctly enforced on grounds of benevolence; and no other general or special ground is recognized as actual, or implied as possible. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another" (Rom. xiii. 8). "Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another" (Eph. iv. 25).

§ 132. (8) The benevolence taught and exemplified in the Christian ethics is at once the most refined in its emotional quality, and extreme in its disinterestedness. So far as its inner spirit is concerned, it has introduced and made familiar to the human race new

This benevolence eminently pure and disinterested.

conceptions of what is possible in the emotions and affections of man. With the practical consequences of this new sentiment, we are not concerned: we notice only those consequences which have affected the ethical theories of Christendom. We turn, first of all, to the new type of benevolence as described in that familiar exposition of charity which has invested the term itself with a special import, at least in English speech. This import is not limited to ethical and religious teachings, nor to religious or theological terminology. It has passed into literature, elevating and enlarging the ideals of human excellence, and making them familiar in the characters and sentiments of imaginative writings of every description. No contrast between ancient and modern literature is more striking than in this particular. When Portia urges, —

“The quality of mercy is not strained:

. . . it is twice blessed;

It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes,” —

she gives expression to the same spirit which is echoed in those words of the Master, which a Christian apostle enjoins his friends continually to remember, as “the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” This saying seems to have floated of itself along the stream of Christian tradition: it was so beautiful and strange, that, when heard, it could not be forgotten. But we find no such sentiment in pagan literature, as the expression of the best established ethical ideals of ancient life. If, in Oriental poetry and fiction, we often find intense sympathy with suffering and sorrow, it is violent and uncertain, quixotic and sentimental; showing that it does not spring out of the prevailing practical sentiments of the people, as the bright consummate flower of a deep root of sober consent and conviction, but is ever the hot-house growth of a mystical quixotism. Compare Edwin Arnold’s “*Light of Asia*” with the thousand tales of practical Christian self-sacrifice, and the ten thousand unwrit-

ten stories which have been enacted in Christian communities and Christian homes.¹

Not only is the quality of the benevolence which Christianity proposes and prescribes thus refined and idealized, but the energy of its disinterestedness is altogether unique and peculiar. It teaches, in all sobriety and force, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John iii. 16, 17.) "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John iii. 18). "If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John iv. 20.) This extreme of disinterestedness in external action was in its way as novel and peculiar as was the quality of the emotions which animated and impelled it. Under the pagan theory, men could die for their friends, their kindred, and their country, under the motives which the affections for either and all might furnish. But the comprehensive duty of self-sacrifice for our fellow-men was never enforced and recognized as the controlling law of one's active powers, as it is in the Christian system. The family, the friendly, and the patriotic impulses were recognized as noble and as duty-enforcing motives; but their motive power was derived from something short of the relations of human brotherhood,

Its quality
specially
unselfish.

The cross.

¹ To guard, once for all, against the objection that the proposed limits of our argument should exclude any consideration of the practical energy of the feelings which Christianity stimulates and sanctions in actual life, we would say that our judgment of the speculative value of any ethical system may be affected very largely by the relative force and quality of the feelings and motives which it sanctions and excites. In such a case, the intellect judges, and by logical rules; but the data and materials with which it has to do are the feelings, or rather the convictions glowing with emotion, which, in the present case, are concerned with personal beings, i.e., with man and his fellow-man.

demanding constant self-sacrifice in imitation of that single commanding and moving example to which all Christendom perpetually turns as its symbol and inspiration.

§ 133. (9) We have already recognized the truth, that the

**Take their
quailty from
Christian
motives.**

Christian ethics derive their quality and their energy from the personal and religious motives which are peculiar to the Christian system, — with the effects, rather than with the forces or agencies which

produce them. These effects are ethical in the double form of new ideals of character and conduct, and new precepts in which these are declared and enforced. So far as the Christian type

**Christian
types of be-
nevolence.
Justice.**

of benevolence is peculiar in its energy and reach, it must necessarily modify the Christian doctrine of justice. Justice is the rendering to each man his due or his right. Subjectively, this sense of justice

could not fail to be quickened and purified by Christian motives and examples. Objectively, Christianity has elevated the rights of individual men into importance by the new conceptions which

**Estimate of
the value of
the individ-
ual man.**

it enforces of the estimate in which they are held by the living and personal God who is revealed, in and by Christ, as the Saviour of the human race.

These conceptions respect the dignity and worth of the individual, and every thing which pertains to him, — the substantial equality of all men, the sacredness of human rights, the inviolability of human personality, and the value of human life. These new or newly energized conceptions could not but affect the legislation and the manners of all Christendom. The modern doctrines of personal liberty and of rights, involving as they do the recognition of political equality between man and man, have, in fact, been the growths of Christian ideas. It is doubtful whether these principles could survive a theory which should abandon this faith in God's personal rule and in man's personal moral responsibility, in which they originated. Indeed, the indications are more than manifest, that the new theories of evolution, with the ethical and sociological applica-

tions of the same, tend most rapidly to an unfeeling and cruel contempt for individual interests, under the pressure of the great ocean-tide of tendency which is recognized as resistless and supreme. How much soever this doctrine of agnostic evolution may borrow without acknowledgment from the Christian doctrine of altruism, it has little promise and little comfort for the individual lives which it must engulf with every movement of its advancing waves.

The obligations to uprightness and veracity have also received new prominence and energy from the enforcement of the same relations between man and God, and, as a consequence, between man and man. So soon as men are recognized as belonging to a common moral community under the rule and care of one moral Sovereign and Father in heaven, the sensibility to truth is increased by love to man; and veracity is enforced by confidence in and loyalty toward the moral Sovereign who cares for truth, and is ever at hand to favor and defend those who practise it in his name.

From the same faith has been derived the quick and vivid sense of personal honor which is the natural product of a sense of that personal responsibility which is founded in individual freedom. From the same root has grown the sense of the unlawfulness of suicide, and the unworthiness and guilt of subjection to sensual appetite and sexual lust.

From the moment that the Christian faith began to make itself felt as an ethical force, the sense of personal worth and self-respect on the part of man, and the sense of personal purity in both man and woman, began to take possession of the human mind, and to work everywhere like leaven. Both were the natural and necessary consequences of the newly esteemed value of every human person in the estimate of the pitying and loving God whose Son is the sympathizing Redeemer of the human race. No man could be degraded in his own eyes, or quietly submit to be dishonored by another man, who believed

himself a member of the household whom God had thus honored. The sense of self-respect and of honor could not fail to be stimulated and justified on the part of every man for himself, however mean his station or limited his capacities. The consciousness of natural rights, the scornful repudiation of bondage of any sort, were the certain consequences of the new aspirations and hopes for the improvement of their condition on the part of the low-born and depressed. Slavery in Christendom, in all its forms, began to disappear with the acknowledgment of Christ as the one Master; and, though it often re-appeared, was all the while dying a lingering death.

The feeling of honor has assumed various unnatural phases, and endured manifold caricatures, as in the intensified and extravagant sentiments of chivalry; but whether in knight or esquire, in nobleman or serf, in landlord or peasant, it has never ceased to be freshly inspired wherever men have lived within the sound of the bells of Christian churches.

The estimate of sexual purity also, with all that is associated with it in manners and sentiment, has very largely been the quiet growth of the leaven of self-control and self-respect and personal worth which are the legitimate results of consecration to the service of a blessed Master, and of the associations of the Christian world with her also who was "blessed among women." Hence the wonderful contrast between Pagan and Christian sentiment in respect to a point which is vital to ethical progress. No more striking proof can be furnished of the part which Christian ideas and motives have had in elevating the conceptions of Christian morality in these particulars, than is found in the signs of degeneracy, in the theories of anti-Christian agnostics, in respect to the lawfulness of suicide, and the practical easiness of some in respect to what they style natural physical indulgences; as also concerning the value of human happiness, human life, and human rights, with multitudes of the uncultured. The theory which derives the very conceptions of duty

Christian
estimate of
sexual
purity.

and responsibility exclusively from social sympathy with the community personified as "the tribal self," can find no sufficient security that the notions of duty will become more refined, and the susceptibility to the same will become more acute, in the resources of a blind tendency to evolution and progress.

§ 134. (10) The Christian ethics regard the external actions as at once of the greatest and of the least consequence. By this cardinal peculiarity they provide for the freedom of private judgment, for toleration of wide differences of opinion in respect to questions of individual duty, and for progress and development in public and private codes of morality.

External actions of the greatest and least consequence.

First of all, so far as any class of actions can have but one ethical import, and indicate but one intention or purpose, their language is imperative and uncompromising. "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee;" "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." (Matt. viii. 8, 9). Whenever an action is a sign or an expression of the intent or purpose of duty, it is recognized as of the utmost consequence. In such cases the actions must be performed at any sacrifice. They both manifest the character, and by manifesting test it. No excuse is admitted. No fear of consequences, no personal risk or loss, even of life itself, is allowed for an instant as a reason or an excuse for wrong-doing. To plead the inner purpose or desire — the faith or the love — as a substitute for the right word or deed, is of no avail. The deed must be done, cost what it may. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Requisitions uncompromising.

On the other hand, in cases when the act is not regarded by all men as a duty, — either because the special circumstances do not require it, or because one man understands their import better than another, — each man must follow his own judgment, and make that the law of his conscience. Examples of such a difference of

The right and duty of private judgment.

opinion occurred when the Christian ethics first began to be applied to the conduct of life. Questions of practical difficulty arose very early, which distracted and vexed the consciences of men, occasioning crimination and condemnation on the one side, and the assertion of individual freedom on the other. The flesh of slaughtered animals was exposed for sale, after having been previously offered in sacrifice upon the altar of an idol. Such flesh was conceived by some (and naturally enough) to have been polluted by being thus connected with the worship of a false god. Many believers as naturally and honestly refused to purchase or eat of such flesh, regarding the use of it as immoral. Others saw no harm in either act, inasmuch as neither expressed sympathy with idol-worship (Rom. xiv.).

The difficulty was adjusted by declarations which are good for all time, and which assert and enforce the principle, that, in respect to many important questions of conduct, each individual must be allowed to form and hold his own opinion, and is bound to act in accordance with it. "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself [as an honest man] before God" (Rom. xiv. 22). "He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks" (Rom. xiv. 6). "He that doubteth [i.e., questions whether the act is lawful] is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith [conviction]; for whatsoever is not of faith [conviction] is sin" (Rom. xiv. 23). "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself [i.e., in this matter]; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Rom. xiv. 14). This does not imply that all external actions are indifferent, but rather the contrary. It only declares that certain actions are discerned to be right or wrong according as each man discerns their import more or less sagaciously, or has attained an ampler or more limited knowledge.

It should be observed, that the right of private judgment.

from the nature of the case, can pertain only to the import and the exercise of external actions. It can never reach or affect the feelings or purposes. In respect to what these ought to be, the judgments of all men are presumed to be the same (§§ 72, 76).

Neither the Christian nor any other ethics can admit the possibility of any disagreement in respect to the rules for the intentions or feelings. With respect to these, it supposes that all men must necessarily be at one. It is also guarded against the perverted construc-

Rules which respect the purposes uniform and exacting.

tion, that the end sanctions or justifies the means (§ 77), when applied to the primal and sacred duties of life: for the reason, that it denies that to dishonor such duties can ever be the means of good; and enforces its position by its quick and honest discernment of the relations of human life, and its fixed and well-grounded faith in the moral order of the universe. With regard to the outward actions, however, which are ordinarily supposed to manifest these feelings, and therefore are ordinarily required as duties, men are not only permitted to exercise their private judgment, but the right to do so is accorded to them as a necessary incident of human limitations, and therefore as sacred and inalienable. It follows, that the right of private judgment involves the duty of tolerating such differences of opinion and conduct, not merely as being expedient, from considerations of public quiet, but as enforced by the obligations of conscience. Hence it is no paradox to assert, that the Christian ethics are the most severe and uncompromising on the one hand, and the most tolerant and charitable on the other; finding the reasons for the intentions and duties which they exact in a single principle, and enforcing both by the energy of their peculiar sanctions of duty.

§ 135. (11) For these reasons, the Christian system provides for indefinite development and progress in the public and private codes of morality. The more that mankind can learn in respect to the laws of their

Christian ethics provides for progress.

individual and social natures, and the more completely they master the special circumstances of their changing conditions, the more completely will they be able to answer the question, by what rules they shall shape and direct their conduct. The common-sense of a partially cultivated community must differ greatly from the common-sense of one more completely educated, even with respect to the morals and manners of common life. In respect to those actions which are not immediately obvious to the uneducated and inexperienced, what is called common-sense needs to be instructed by that larger experience and more sagacious insight which men call science. This is especially true of those acts which affect the remoter interests of the community, or which are prescribed or forbidden by legislation, or which grow out of the complicated conditions of social existence. The experience of the evil consequences of practices tolerated and esteemed innocent or useful in one generation is often required to arouse the conscience of the men of another to a sense of their immoral tendency. Contrariwise, the experience of the harmlessness or usefulness of usages hitherto deemed injurious or questionable may go far to change the opinions of men for the better. It may lead them to approve what they formerly condemned, or to modify their unfavorable estimates. The Christian ethics provides for these changes and this progress by the sharp and permanent distinction which it enforces between the inner man and the outward conduct, and by what we may call its relative indifference to the latter. Hence its morality, in its very nature, must be progressive. It is perfectly free to change, and it is bound to change, because of its power over the individual character and over the community, — to stimulate and control its development in the life of the individual man, and in the life of the common humanity. It provides also for its own progress, eminently by the circumstance, that, the more powerfully the feelings and character of an individual or the community are aroused to an energetic moral life, the more earnest will be the

attention and the sharper the discernment concerning the import and effect of that conduct which it allows or prescribes. Hence, with the practical improvement of the ethical life, there is an almost inevitable certainty of progress in ethical knowledge, and of improvement in the standard of conduct. This is true of the individual and of the community, especially of the latter, so far as it can avail itself of the wisdom and experience of enlightened thinkers or close observers or skilful teachers. The tendencies of public and private economies, and of legislation and institutions of every sort, will be clearly watched by a community that is religiously conscientious; and the effects of social activities and provisions in every form of public or private activity will be sagaciously observed, furnishing the material for the inductions of science and for the rules of life. The objection is sometimes urged against Christianity, that it is narrow, and therefore incapable of development and progress. The objection reveals a very narrow conception of Christianity itself.

Involves progressive enlightenment.

This is so far from being true, that, of all the systems which have been proposed to man, it is the only one that can fairly claim to be liberal and elastic, for the reasons already given. For the same reasons, it is equally true that it is the only system that provides for constant progress. Its fundamental principle of love as the spring of social activity can never be displaced or outgrown as a motive force; for it covers every possible form of human affections and actions in all conceivable social relations. Whatever in outward act or operation may contribute to human well-being, whether it is known at present, or shall be subsequently discovered, is embraced within its comprehensive range, and provided for by its dynamic force. Whatever can be discovered by science concerning man's relations, whether public or private, will and must be used in its service. Its voice to the human race ever has been, and ever will be, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things

The only system that provides for progress.

are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things*" (Phil. iv. 8). Its constant prayer for all mankind is this: "That your love (i.e. inner principle, and motive force) may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve the things that are excellent" (Phil. i. 10).

So soon as love as a moving force shall abound in energy, and love shall be accompanied with every description of knowledge as to the forms of outward action which are appropriate for its manifestation, so soon will the capacities of Christian ethics to perfect human society be tested and proved, and sociology, so far as it can be a science, will in fact be perfected.

It should not be overlooked, in this connection, that Christianity begins its work as an ethical force, in the form of a human society; viz., the kingdom of God. As such it assumes to be pre-eminently a social force, and promises and proposes to grow and develop itself, till it shall fill and rule the whole earth. If, as many suppose, the nature of this society has been more or less imperfectly or even erroneously conceived, this proves rather than disproves the truth of the promise and prophecy; inasmuch as this would imply that it is sagacious and bold enough to promise to outgrow its own errors in respect to its own nature.

This society is a human society; and so far as it is perfect, it must be perfect in all its conceivable human relations, if in none other. So far as it gains power, it must eventually control the public and private conduct of men in every particular. Its progress and perfection cannot, from the nature of the case, be confined to growth in numbers or wealth or learning or power, but must especially concern the character and conduct of men. In the prophetic ideal of its Master, it was to be progressive in every particular; pre-eminently, as it would seem, in the perfection and enlightenment of his disciples. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened" (Matt. xiii. 33). "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, . . . which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (Matt. xiii. 31, 32).

§ 136. (12) In entire harmony with these conceptions is the method or form in which morality is taught in the New Testament; viz., by principles, and not by rules. To furnish a single man with the rules which might seem desirable or even necessary for a week, would be an idle attempt; much more, to do this for a year or a lifetime; much more, to provide a single community with such a code for a shorter or a longer period. It would be preposterous to think of furnishing an ethical system for the entire human race during all the changing and unlimited phases of its existence. In what sense, then, and how, can Christianity propose itself as an ethical system which shall be adequate to guide the human race in all its variety of internal and external conditions during all the phases of its possible development and progress? Plainly, only as it enforces certain principles in the most general forms of their application; and it is precisely in this way that human duties are taught by the Great Teacher. We ought not to be surprised, that in order to enforce these principles as principles, and also to show that in their use they admit of an endless variety of applications, so many should be announced in an extreme and even in a paradoxical form, as in many of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. The form is paradoxical, in order to show that a literal interpretation is not intended, and a literal obedience is impossible: as, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matt. v. 39-42). This method of teaching ethics, indeed, is not peculiar to Christ, being Oriental in its type; but the daring with which it is used without loss of dignity or earnestness, and the boldness with which it is applied to large classes of duties which are unpleasant, and made to

Gives instruction by principles, rather than by rules.

Many are in paradoxical phrase.

cover, as it were, the entire field of human activities, are characteristic of the Christian ethics. As no other ethics concerns itself with principles so manifold and profound, none other could venture to confine itself so exclusively to principles only, and also to illustrate them so boldly by paradoxes.

It is true, that as a consequence no other system has exposed itself so certainly and necessarily to misconstruction by its friends, and to hostile criticism by its foes. The ignorant extremes to which its friends have pushed the principles which they have imperfectly understood, and the advantage which its foes have taken of these misconstructions of its friends as well as of their own superficial understanding of both principles and inferences, have exposed the Christian ethics to manifold evil fortunes. These fortunes, however, would be certain to befall any system of profound and universal ethics, founded upon the deepest principles, and requiring unquestioning applications; especially if it were to be taught in popular language, and brought by picturesque imagery within the reach of unreflecting minds, — most of all, if it were to be a system which could both satisfy the speculative philosopher, and instruct the unlettered savage. Such a system must of necessity be exposed to these inconveniences; to say nothing of the mischief which the pride of opinion, the bigotry of partisanship, the intoxication of fanaticism, and the pedantry of learning, would be certain to occasion. A system profound and strong enough for all generations must necessarily be often and grossly misunderstood; and these misunderstandings must occasion enormous evils in opinion, character, and conduct.

We can only refer to some of these misunderstandings. We name first of all the fundamental and most serious error that the Christian benevolence is weak and effeminate; i.e., a passive affection of the sensibilities and emotions only, and not an activity of the will and character. This error is a mistaken inference from the earnestness with which disinterested love is insisted on as the

**Liable to
be mis-
construed.**

**Charged
with being
weak and
effeminate.**

principle of all duty, and the emphasis with which certain forms of its manifestation were exemplified by the Master, and exacted of his first disciples. The cardinal virtues recognized by mankind, in those times, had been either the Pharisaic scrupulosity of a formal ritualism, or such a stoical self-sufficiency and self-conceit as excluded sympathy, pity, and humility. Against these current and prevailing errors, Christianity uttered its emphatic protest, in the example of its Teacher and his followers; and, so to speak, it staked its authority and its existence upon the issue of the struggle which followed. Christianity itself — much less the Christian ethics — did not come as a philosophy with a well-rounded scholastic system, but as a practical directory of the life, telling the men of its generation what they ought to be and do. In doing this, it singled out the defects of temper and conduct which prevailed, to rebuke and forbid them. Hence it assailed Pharisaism and superstition in worship, and stoicism and licentiousness in conduct, and gave special prominence to the opposite virtues in the lives and precepts of its Founder and his first disciples.

Superficial students and narrow interpreters have drawn the inference that the Christian system did not provide for any other virtues than those which it definitely named and brought into the highest relief. They have inferred that it did not inculcate the manlier sentiments, and did not provide for intellectual discernment and independence in respect to any point, least of all in the judgments of faith and duty. They have argued that it was fitted to train only unreasoning bigots or sentimental milksops; that it patronized weaklings and cowards; that it failed to encourage, much less to inspire, the manliness which can discern one's rights, or the courage which can assert and defend them. Some otherwise very intelligent men have gone so far as to contend, that, were its teachings consistently and fearlessly applied in practice, it would dispense with civil government and separate properties, and break up or leave behind many venerable land-

**With over-
looking
important
virtues.**

marks of usages and institutions. Those who hold these views are both friends and foes, critics and disciples. The fact that many of its professed friends hold to these views, as they think to its honor, emboldens its foes to urge them to its disadvantage.¹

It would seem to be a decisive reply to these positions, that we nowhere find the principle laid down in form, or implied in principle, or inferred in fact, that civil government or separate properties are wrong in principle, or that either is finally to be set aside. So far as the incidental or positive teachings of Christianity furnish any evidence upon this point, they constantly recognize government and property as natural and permanent institutions. Government is expressly declared to be an ordinance of God, which imposes perpetual obligations on the conscience. The position of Christianity in respect to its authority is distinctly and positively summed up in the words, “wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience’ sake” (Rom. xiii. 5). The same is true in respect to the institution of property; its doctrine being, “Owe no man any thing.” The righteousness which is so often and so emphatically enjoined in the New Testament is honesty in respect to all matters of private ownership and claims. As it is with government and property, so is it with all the recognized relationships of life, which imply rights or claims and enforce duties. This is exemplified in the fact, that with the dues of property all other dues are connected in the comprehensive direction, “Render to all men their dues,” — tribute, custom, fear, and honor; thus providing for all the relationships of life, the major and the minor, the fixed and the movable.

**Opposite
charges
urged
against it.**

It deserves notice here, that, in respect to the interpretation of its ethics, Christianity has been constantly ground between two millstones, — its fanatical friends, on the one side, who have denied that it actually recognized government and property; and its fanatical

¹ e.g., *Modern Christianity a Civilized Heathenism.*

foes, on the other, who have made its actual recognition of one or both a ground of objection and criticism. It has been noted as a defect in the Christian ethics, that Christianity did not enjoin the duty that men should sometimes resist magistrates and overturn civil government. It has been charged, on the one hand, that it unqualifiedly taught the doctrine of passive obedience, and therefore was convicted of weakness ; or, that, recognizing the duty of resistance to rulers as certain to arise, it did not provide against it by giving rules for the actions of men in so critical a condition of human affairs. It is enough to say, that most political philosophers argue that it is impossible to formulate and express in language any rules concerning the duty or the right of revolution which could be of any conceivable use beforehand ; and the fact that the Christian ethics did not attempt to give such rules, and did not even anticipate the possible need of them, is an evidence, to say the least, of no common sagacity. The charge that Christianity teaches absolute submission and passive obedience may be dismissed with the charge that it does not inculcate the heroic and manly virtues of courage, self-reliance, self-defence, and self-assertion. These virtues needed no stimulus at the time when Christianity began to contend with the special vices and weaknesses of its time. It is its eminent and peculiar glory, that it fearlessly attacked the moral defects which were current, and these alone, and yet always assailed them by striking at their root in the heart and character. Its Master lost his life by boldly assailing specific evils, but in thus losing his human life he won the heart of mankind to that love of himself in which is involved a consecration of the heart to the comprehensive law of love, which he enthroned in the schools of science.

Reasons why
it did not
discuss
political
duties more
minutely.

Mr. J. S. Mill says in his essay on Liberty, "While, in the morality of the best pagan nations, duty to the state holds even a disproportionate place, in purely Christian ethics that grand department of duty is scarcely noticed or acknowledged. It is in the Koran, not in the New Testament, that we read the maxim, 'A man

Criticism of
Mr. J. S. Mill.

who appoints any man to an office when there is in his dominions another man better qualified for it, sins against God and against the state.' This objection may serve to illustrate the superiority of the Christian ethics to those of the Koran." It certainly illustrates a singular failure to understand the ethics of the New Testament, on the part of Mr. Mill. The one teacher undertook to improve upon the other by superadding a few directions respecting external conduct which should be distinctive of the new and improved Christianity of the eight century; as, abstinence from wine, keeping of certain fasts, the destruction of images, and the readiness to propagate the Koran by the sword. But the fruitfulness and germinant power of Christian love, after the example of a personal Master, inspired to universal sympathy, to forgiveness of injuries, to humility and self-denial, even to death; and thus called into life virtues which previously had scarcely been recognized. The Christian system provides, in its comprehensive principle, for every special duty to the state for which men shall ever find a reason in the most advanced stages of political and social science; yet wisely fails to set down in black and white special rules for appointments to office, and many others which any man of common sense and common honesty could not fail to discern and infer. The one system of ethics is a tree completely developed, with scanty branches and foliage, planted in a sterile soil, but incapable of further development and growth; the other is a living germ, having within itself the capacity for development and evolution with all the needs and capacities of its future environment under the most diverse circumstances of change and of progress in the human race.

§ 137. It is sometimes objected, that the Christian ethics are impracticable, because a system so unselfish cannot be applied in a society which is avowedly and actually controlled by principles of self-interest. It is forgotten, that separate and special duties to one's self, to one's family, and country, are entirely consistent, and are even required by the disinterested love of man as man. The objection itself finds all its force in a defective conception of the duties which true benevolence requires. We acknowledge that Christian aims and ideals are higher and purer than those which most men adopt; and that to expect them to do this at once, and thoroughly, would seem romantic if not quixotic. That they are such as very few men exemplify with the energy and consistency which they warrant, is no argument against the

**Christian
ethics called
imprac-
ticable.**

practicability of the system itself, but rather an argument for the need of those nobler ideals and that more energetic force which Christianity furnishes, and its disciples respond to. In no other sense can it be true that the Christian ethics are impracticable. Were they adopted at once in the full energy of their fundamental principles, and applied in every possible form to the acts and institutions of humanity, the result in a renovated manhood would demonstrate that they constitute the only practicable ethical system which the world has ever known, or could dream of.

§ 138. If we compare this system in its theoretic and practical perfection with any and every other which has been painfully wrought out by the ablest and most earnest philosophers, — whether with those which were matured in desperate earnestness without the light and inspiration of Christianity, or with those which have been composed in Christendom in ill-disguised but ignorant contempt of its light and wisdom, — we cannot but acknowledge its superior insight into the nature of man, and the unmeasured superiority of its speculative profoundness, and its practical adaptations to the various and changing wants and circumstances of humanity. We are also struck with the fact that the best pagan ethics are more allied to the Christian than some (not to say most) of the so-called Christian systems which feebly and imperfectly recognize the profoundness of the ethics of the New Testament. The ethics of Plato and Aristotle are in some important particulars broader in their principles, more elevated in their spirit, and truer to the nature of man, than several well-known modern systems, which, with the New Testament open before their authors, reduce all the phenomena of conscience and duty, all the obligations to law and order, all the restraints upon murder, robbery, and lust, to the relations of mechanism, and the affinities of matter, or the actions and re-actions of monads and environment.

**The Christian
contrasted
with every
other ethics.**

§ 139. If our estimate of the Christian ethics is just, no

thoughtful man can fail to ask himself the question, Whence came this system, in form so simple, in pathos so moving, in its principles so profound, in its practical rules so adjustable, in its capacities for progress and adaptation so inexhaustible? Had it appeared by itself, and did the author make no claims for himself, it would itself suggest and enforce claims the most exalted for his work and for himself. Inasmuch, however, as its Expounder asserts for himself the supernatural authority which its internal characteristics would of themselves suggest, it is not easy to evade or resist the argument, or to hold ourselves back from the conclusion which its striking and manifold excellences force upon us, that both in an extraordinary if not a supernatural sense are from God.

§ 140. The following additional questions naturally suggest themselves with respect to the Christian ethics, as related to the ethics taught and exemplified in the Old Testament: 1. How far are these two systems the same, and in what respects do they differ? 2. In what sense is there progress from the one to the other? 3. Are the precepts of one or both in any case immoral in their ethical teachings, spirit, or example? 4. By what general rules or formulæ may we be guided in using the general principles or special rules of ethics in their application to other and later times?

§ 141. (1) Is the ethical system of the Old Testament the same with that of the New? To this question we answer: It cannot be questioned, that, in their fundamental principles, the two systems are the same. The first and great commandment of the Hebrew law, given also at the very earliest period, is declared by the great Teacher of Christendom to be this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and the second is declared to be like unto it in authority and sacredness, viz., "Thou shalt love thy neighbor

Whence did it originate?

Further questions concerning this system.

(1) Are the ethics of the Old and New Testaments the same?

as thyself.” The comprehensive character of these two precepts is next affirmed in the words, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” The same comprehensive character is re-affirmed more explicitly, and in a reflective form, in the words of Paul: “And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying; namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” With this evidence, there can be no question, that so far as the principle **How far** which underlies the two systems is concerned, **different?** either in words or in fact, in the letter or the spirit, it is precisely the same. Nothing in the entire history of man’s ethical development is more surprising than the fact, that these great commandments should have been so distinctly formulated and so comprehensively affirmed so early in the ethical education of the race, and announced as the foundation-pillars of all human obligation. The expansion of them into the so-called Ten Commandments is simply a legitimate attempt to apply them to the more prominent of Hebrew institutions, and some of the conspicuous relations of human life. The ethical import and the varied application of the Hebrew system were also most comprehensively expressed in the words, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”.

§ 142. (2) In what sense, and to what extent, is there progress from one of these systems to the other? In **(2) In what** the same sense in which there is progress in any **sense is there** ethical system. The fact that this progress was **progress** directed by constant divine agency, and often or **from one to** always quickened by supernatural communications and supernatural power, in no sense takes it out of relation to the laws of natural growth and development. So far as men recognize the import of any fundamental principles more and more clearly in their application to special cases of conduct, or even to the control and modification of their feelings; so far, and so

far only, can they discover new and special rules of themselves, or accept them when imparted by teachers. The conditions of such progress have been already explained at length. Teachers and communities must be awakened to a warm and sympathizing interest in ethical truths ; and they must have experience to illustrate the operation and results of external conduct, and sufficient intellectual culture to render them capable of being instructed by what they observe. The doctrine that the Hebrew people were also dependent on special divine guidance and instruction, for their institutions and in their history, explains the original superiority of their moral code, and the equally surprising fact, that, in their conceptions of the import of this code, they were continually making progress. Such progress, it should be carefully observed, in its very nature confirms the original principles, by the abandonment of mistaken and the adoption of corrected applications of their import to the feelings and conduct. It implies, that the earlier applications to conduct and feeling were mistaken and imperfect, and that the later were more in accordance with the truth. In other words, it implies development and growth. It involves the necessary consequence, that the earlier teachings did not condemn the conduct which the later teachings forbade, and that the conscience of earlier times was never offended, either by the practices and teachings or the sentiments and actions which all the men of later times rejected and condemned. Such progress we find as we proceed along the Hebrew and emerge into the Christian Scriptures. Such progress is not inconsistent with the moral superiority of either, or with the position that the morality of the two is the same. Indeed, any sound or thoughtful system of ethics must be capable of progress. If it fails to undergo new phases of adaptation, and to be expressed in more befitting language and actions, it will, in all probability, either be petrified into a statue, or decay as a corpse. If it is not, it cannot be taught in comprehensive and fundamental principles, but can be im-

Every living system must be progressive.

parted only in positive and isolated precepts. A principle in morality, as in every science or art, is always germinal, growing, and productive, and the only form of truth that can be. To this general truth we should expect that a morality taught by supernatural authority, and enforced by an extraordinary providence, would form no exception. We should simply expect it to be conspicuous for the unity of its fundamental truths, the variety and richness of their applications, and the progressiveness and affluence of its development. It ought also to be observed, that special arrangements were made in the Hebrew system for progress in its ethical sentiment and opinion, by a permanent provision for the mission of special teachers or prophets, one of whose functions was to interpret and apply the general principles of the fundamental political and moral code to the changing circumstances and the advancing culture and conscience of successive generations. The existence of special schools for the training and perpetuation of such teachers strongly confirms the position, not only that the morality of the Hebrews was capable of progress, but that special arrangements were made from the beginning for its progressive development. The distinguished political services which these prophets rendered are recognized by John Stuart Mill, in his essay on "Representative Government," although he fails to notice their usefulness in developing and applying the germinal principles of their moral system.

The Hebrew system specially progressive.

§ 143. (3) We inquire, next, whether the special ethical directions which we find in the Scriptures, especially in the Old Testament, are immoral in their instructions or spirit or examples. We select as examples those which would occur to any mind: viz., the tolerance of personal slavery, of polygamy, of personal and blood revenge, of the treatment of captives in war, which we find in the fundamental and special laws given to the Hebrews; also the alleged spirit of cruelty and revenge in some of the

(3) Are any of the precepts of the Old Testament immoral?

Hebrew psalms, and the revengeful and cruel conduct of conspicuous Hebrew leaders and worthies.

To this comprehensive question, we give this comprehensive reply: The Hebrew laws were given to an actual people, whom they took as they found. They found this people, so to speak, a barbarous tribe, the majority of whom were in a very imperfect condition of actual knowledge and capacity, in respect to the principles of morality; with a feeble capacity of feeling in respect to moral obligation; and a very limited knowledge of the special external duties in which these principles should be exemplified, and to which these impulses would urge them. In respect to the so-called fundamental and axiomatic rights,—as of the child to his life or property, against his father; or the wife to her conjugal position, as against her husband; or the citizen against the state,—they were in the same condition of ethical infancy from which the Roman jurisprudence was slow and late in emancipating its subjects, many centuries later. The Hebrew code found the Hebrew people in the actual possession of barbarous customs and institutions, inured to constant warfare, with its attendant passions and violence, and accustomed to domestic slavery in some one or more of its manifold forms. To this state of morals and manners, to this condition of ethical infancy in respect to what seem to us some of the most obvious ethical truths and precepts, these institutions were skilfully adapted; tolerating practices which could not be eradicated without actual re-creation, softening barbarities which would not be suddenly abandoned, and lifting the whole community by the slow but certain processes of natural development as animated and quickened, as instructed and directed, by supernatural teachings and influence. We cannot here give the reasons for holding this general theory of the Hebrew economy. That this may be claimed for it, is clear from the very highest authority, who explains the legal tolerance, by the Mosaic law, of unlimited and arbitrary divorce on the part of the husband,

as follows: "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. xix. 8). How it was in the beginning, with the divine idea and law of marriage, had been previously explained (Matt. xix. 5 *sqq.*). The same principle may be applied to explain the legal tolerance of slavery, with specific directions for the regulation and the mitigation of its evils, as also to the softening of many other barbarisms in public institutions and private manners. In respect to all these formal and informal codes, it may be safely and truly said, that they did not offend the moral sense of the people to whom they were given and among whom they were allowed; and that in them, as it were in their very root, a living force was provided which was destined to slough off their excrescences, and in due time to produce fairer flowers and better fruits. In all these special provisions, we discern a higher standard of practical and special morality than that of any of the peoples with whom they had intercourse, and a constant tendency, in the genius of the system, towards a permanent improvement.¹

§ 144. In respect to acts of seeming cruelty and revenge which were perpetrated by men in other respects of devout feelings and saintly aspirations, it is enough to say, that possibly they were acts of necessity in the administration of rude justice by an arbitrary ruler, or military officer, under the received customs and exigencies of war. The characters of men who were distinguished in the Hebrew history for patriotism and devotion are never recognized as examples for imitation in any particular except their goodness. The acts and feelings which were inconsistent with their nobler traits are to be taken for what they are worth when tried by the perfect standard; it being remembered always, that

Ethical interpretation of acts of cruelty and war.

¹ Cf. J. B. MOZLEY, *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages*, New York, 1877, for an admirable discussion of the entire subject of the morality of the Old-Testament teachings and history; cf. also BISHOP BUTLER, *Analogy*, part ii. chap. iii.

their words and acts, tested by the measure of their times, were by no means so criminal as if measured by the judgments of times more enlightened.

In respect to the *sentiments* of seeming cruelty and revenge which are found in close connection with devout and unselfish motives, it might be instructive to many men, to read, in connection with the so-called imprecatory Psalms, the excited denunciations of slaveholding and of slaveholders by many conspicuous reformers, preachers, and politicians, in the beginning and progress of the anti-slavery agitation in this country, as also the equally extravagant sermons and prayers of many of their opponents; or to call to mind the free use of the spirit, if not of the language, of the imprecatory Psalms in Great Britain, during the great Sepoy-rebellion in India; or to recall the severity of the civil and military administration, then and since, against the enemies of the English Government, and the summary proceedings of not a few Christian officers in disposing of the lives of captives and criminals, as reflected in the light of their unquestionably devout and humane spirit. In every one of these examples, we may admit that the motives were pure, the aspirations unselfish, and the zeal kindled from the altar of God, and yet hold that all were corrupted by earthly admixtures in temper and act. The revengeful spirit of single passages in the Psalms of David no more sanctions similar feelings on our part than what we call his acts of adultery and murder. That so good a man should commit such crimes, is explained by the feeble moral sense of his times in respect to the heinousness of similar offences in a king. Alas that this feebleness should so often have been exhibited, even in the present Christian century!

**Examples
and practices
should be in-
terpreted by
the historic
sense.**

It is not always easy to satisfy one's moral feelings by any theoretical considerations, or the use of the most striking examples, however pertinent or fitting these may be. It requires some historic sense and capacity to interpret justly and intelligently the men of other

times and different culture from our own, and much more to judge of them charitably. While, in one point of view, nothing is so stern and sacred as the law of duty, and the principles which it imposes, there is, on the other, nothing so varied, and at times seemingly so inconsistent, as the actions and feelings which it sanctions, especially as exhibited by men and races of diverse cultures and religions. Notwithstanding these differences, and the embarrassments they occasion, there is but one law of duty, as there is but one God; and the name of each is love.

§ 145. The last question is no less important than the preceding: What formula may we use in interpreting, and applying to our own times, the general principles and special rules of the Scriptures? The general principles of morality are valid for all time. Hence every comprehensive requirement of the moral law which we find in the Scriptures shines by its own light as truly as it is enforced by divine authority. So soon as this law is stated and comprehended, it is assented to by the intellect, and responded to by the feelings, of all men, in every generation, in every condition of culture, and every grade of civilization.

(4) By what formula can we practically apply scriptural precepts?

§ 146. But the Scriptures also abound with special messages and rules of duty given at different periods of the world's history, and under every variety of circumstances. How, then, shall we know that these messages have any meaning or authority for ourselves? By what criteria do we judge that a message of a Hebrew prophet to an Oriental nation, or another generation of men, is also a message of God to us concerning our duty; or that the particular precepts of Christ to his original disciples, or of an apostle to Christian believers in the infancy of their life, have any significance for our conduct and circumstances? To these questions the answer is simple and brief.

Questions respecting the application even of positive teachings.

The special directions given under particular circumstances,

wherever there is evidence that they were designed to be permanent and universal rules, are equally binding upon all the men to whose circumstances they apply. But a direction may be given for a special occasion and special circumstances which correspond exactly to persons and circumstances at the present time; and yet, unless it is clear that this direction was given for all times and occasions, it need not follow that it is a rule of duty for ourselves. For example, the directions of the apostles in respect to the speaking of women in churches were explicit and decisive; but, before they are applied to the present time, we must be assured that they were intended to be permanent, as really as that the occasions are similar. The criterion is double: the rule must befit present circumstances as truly as those under which it was originally given, and it must be shown to be a permanent rule. It is only when both these conditions concur, that any rule, however specific, is binding on the conscience as of scriptural authority.

PART II.

THE PRACTICE OF DUTY, OR ETHICS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY: CLASSIFICATION OF DUTIES.

§ 147. By a psychological examination of man's moral nature, we have sought to ascertain those endowments and relations which are essential to his moral activity. **Previous inquiries, and their results.** Our subsequent inquiries in moral science have given us the theory of duty as the result of the analysis and determination of those fundamental conceptions and principles which our psychological inquiries evolved. We proceed now to ethics, or the determination and classification of the special rules of duty, so far as they follow from our previous inquiries.

A correct theory of duty must of itself involve a few definite rules of willing and action. We have seen (§ 54) that we cannot examine the endowments which constitute man's moral nature, without discovering what is the end or purpose for which these endowments exist, and, consequently, in what way these activities ought to be employed, as expressed in some comprehensive yet definite rules of voluntary action. Indeed, any and every theory concerning the moral nature or moral powers of man must necessarily provide for certain general principles or rules, as to how this moral nature must be used. These rules, moreover, must extend not only to the volitions and dispositions, the purposes and intentions, but also to definite actions of body and mind.

The rules which we have thus far obtained must, of necessity, be very general, and can serve little direct and practical use in guiding or helping us to the regulation of our actions, and the

conduct of our life. But we cannot stop with these; we cannot be content with the recognition of the general obligation voluntarily to choose what involves our highest good, or to recognize the truth that this good must necessarily involve love to others and allegiance to God. The conclusion, that in order

**Prepare for
other inves-
tigations.**

to attain man's highest good in thought, feeling, and act, we must love our fellow-men as we love ourselves, simply raises, without answering, such subordinate questions as these: "What thought, feeling, word, or act will accomplish this end, to-day, to-morrow, here and there?" or, "Who is my neighbor?" at the present moment, as I encounter this man and that in the experiences and struggles of living. The occasion and the necessity still remain for us to define and justify particular and precise rules of duty for the manifold conditions and relations of our human existence.

§ 148. The statement and enforcement of these rules of special activity constitute what we have chosen to call ethics (§ 4). These rules, in the last analysis, in all cases require right activities or states of the will, as the final and supreme directive and motor of all the other activities of the man. But they chiefly concern its subordinate and particular activities. What its supreme and comprehensive volitions ought to be, is supposed to be easily understood, and to require little definition or enforcement.

**Ethics
respect the
voluntary
purposes.**

These specified volitions or intentions are prominently the subject-matter of ethical direction as they are manifested in feeling and action. The intention, or purpose, has been explained to be the result of volition; i.e., it is a desire or impulse made supreme by the will (§§ 32, 33). But every intention thus made supreme will act itself out in word or deed, unless its manifestations are directed or hindered by some extraneous force. For this reason, the duty to *intend* or *purpose* carries with it the additional obligation to *act* in a particular way. Hence, in the court of duty, to intend supremely, — i.e., voluntarily to desire, — is in effect and responsibility *to act*, even if

the external action is prevented by some superior physical constraint or controlling physical disability. Consequently the rules of ethics respect and include the purposes, the feelings, and the actions, one and all, so far as these are under the control of the will. It is, then, to the right use of the will, that every ethical precept is immediately directed, as it controls the appropriate activities of thought, feeling, and manifestation in word, gesture, or deed. Now a purpose is commanded, now a feeling, now an act, now all three, according to circumstances; it being understood that the intention of duty is always present as the animating soul.

The truth has already been explained, that, while the comprehensive law of duty is the same, many of its special rules must change with changing occasions and varying circumstances. The term "circumstances," as here used, admits of a wide variety of meanings.

Special rules
of duty
change with
circum-
stances.

Circumstances may be apparently as fixed and as universal as the relationships of the family, or the so-called inalienable rights of man, in which cases the most rigorous rules of duty may be ascertained and imposed; or they may be as unstable as the casual opportunity to help a stranger at a street-crossing, or to cheer a forlorn fellow-traveller with a kind word or look, for which no rules whatever can be prescribed. For such transient cases, only the most indefinite advice or counsel can be furnished.

Some of these rules find their starting-point or nucleus in certain original impulses or instinctive tendencies or those psycho-physiological arrangements which determine the human race to certain attitudes or gestures as expressive of certain feelings and thoughts. The recognition of such impulses as universal leads, necessarily, to the imposition of them in the form of law or duty, under the operation of human society, and determines the outlines of a universal code of etiquette or "good form," so far as any such code exists. Many rules of external conduct also have an accidental and arbitrary origin.

Many rules of speech and behavior are also largely obtained by experience and induction, and are, consequently, ranked as probable knowledge, as contrasted with that which is axiomatic. It will not be questioned, that so far as such rules depend on the effects or tendencies of action, whether in the physical or psychical world, they must be obtained by induction, and founded on experience. Even if instinct or intuition or revelation furnish many of the fundamental and comprehensive principles as well as motives of duty, induction must, to a large extent, apply these principles to special cases, and also frame special rules for the direction of the conduct under the light of these principles.

It is notorious that every theory of morals finds some place for induction in its codes of ethics. Theories differ, indeed, in that the advocates of one assert a wider sphere than those of another for intuition, and a narrower sphere for induction. Those writers who assert the largest place for intuition, in determining special rules concerning our duties to God, to our parents, our benefactors, or our friends, will still concede, that, in the changing circumstances of life, these rules must change with experience, and many of them can be improved with the progress of science (§ 92). If any insist that the special rules of duty are incapable of change for the better, they would still concede, that, for the wise application of these rules, man must be instructed by experience, which is another name for induction. The most confident champions of intuitive axioms will confess that resort must constantly be had to probable evidence to determine the cases to which these axioms apply. There are few who would contend that the moral reason, with its categorical imperative, or the moral sense, with its emotional impulses, could possibly be adequate to all the questions or cases of conscience, or the many vexing puzzles of casuistry, however wide may be their range, or positive their decisions.

It is to be observed, however, that what we call induction

includes that subtle sagacity or tact by which the adaptations of nature are discerned, and the indications of nature are interpreted; as truly as those generalizations from observation and experience, which can be justified by decisive instances, or which have been embodied in the statutes of law-makers, the decisions of jurists, the reasonings of publicists, and the systems of moralists. The necessity which constantly summons us to exercise this sagacity in dealing with questions of conscience affords a constant opportunity for improvement in moral tact and sensibility, and constitutes one of the most important conditions of man's moral education and discipline. In these inductions, however, we are not limited to generalizations from the known tendencies of human actions; nor to their effects, as these have been exemplified in human experience, or recorded in human history. The *inner forces* and tendencies of man's nature, whether they are instincts, desires, or affections, furnish often strong probabilities and even decisive evidence of the kinds of action which nature in general prescribes, and warrant us in making confident inductions as to the character and authority of moral rules. It is of little consequence, whether, in such cases, we interpret the rule as a revelation from God, or a law of human nature, so long as it rests on a perceived fitness which we cannot but acknowledge, and which we accept as a safe guide and binding rule for conduct and character.

§ 149. In other words, the materials for these inductions are twofold, — *objective* and *subjective*. The *objective* are those broad and obvious capacities and relationships which constitute human nature, individual and social, and indicate the ends for which man exists. The *subjective* are the strong impulses or feelings which impel to the accomplishment of these ends.

This truth is illustrated by the grounds for the determination and enforcement of parental duties. These are twofold: (1) those manifest and manifold advantages which must result from intrusting to parents the care and pro-

Induction
includes tact.

Materials
objective and
subjective.

Example.

tection of their children, and (2) the strong and ineradicable affections which impel to parental service and sacrifice. In view of the first of these reasons, civil society everywhere recognizes and enforces parental duties. Public sentiment does the same. Every reflecting human being accepts the obligation, and responds to the argument which enforces it. But these obvious tendencies to good—as we have intimated—do by no means exhaust the argument for these duties. The existence of certain special affections that bind the parents, especially the mother, to the child,—which fix her heart upon it in a specializing and tender regard, that grows by subtile processes, and takes precedence of every other affection and impulse,—would indicate that it was the intention of nature, that these affections should ordinarily be implicitly obeyed and cherished as the most imperative and sacred.

§ 150. To any induction from the instincts and emotions, it is often objected, that it founds morality on sentiment only, and exalts feeling above reason; and, moreover, that these natural feelings often conflict with one another, and consequently all of them cannot rule. It may suffice to say in reply, that inductions of this kind which rest upon feeling are not founded on impulse alone, nor on impulse as such, but on impulse as interpreted by reason. They do not justify the conclusion that the existence of the impulse proves that nature intends and commands that the impulse or emotion should always rule; but only under certain conditions. The fact that these natural impulses and feelings often conflict, and cannot all be gratified, proves that they need wise interpretation and intelligent control, but by no means that their force and tenacity are not important data for interpreting the intentions and commands of nature and of duty.

Following this line of thought, we observe that the relationships which constitute man's social and individual economy are to a large extent enforced by certain affections in his spiritual constitution. We classify and divide

Objection to using the feelings.

Classification of duties.

our duties by the prominent relationships which are conspicuous in man's individual and social nature, and the feelings by which they are attended and enforced. The first correspond to the second, and the two usually strengthen one another as indications and evidences of duty. As a consequence, the induction of rules becomes easier and more satisfactory, being founded on double evidence, as has already been exemplified in the case supposed of the moral obligation which enforces parental duties.

§ 151. But whether it be relations without that determine our duties, or impulses from within, one or both, these duties are usually defined by *the objects* with which human beings are connected, and on which their affections and actions terminate. We define the duties of men by the objects with which they hold distinguishable relations, and to which they are usually connected by special affections. These criteria are at once objective and subjective. Of objects other than one's self, there are four classes, — *God, nature, animals, and men.*

Duties usually defined by their objects.

It is also true, that in a special sense also each man holds special relations of duty to himself. This might give us, as the ground of a *twofold* division, the relations of man to himself and to other beings, whether sentient or insentient. By this grouping, God, human beings, animals, and the physical universe would fall into the second class, involving *four* subdivisions. The most common division of duties is *threefold*, — duties to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God; duties to animals and to nature being treated as subordinate to one or other of these three.

To this threefold division, two objections might be, and, indeed, often have been, urged, — first, that many of the duties which man owes to himself must be determined by his constitution as a human being. But it is evident that this constitution can neither be known nor defined except by man's relations to nature, to his fellow-men, and to God. It would follow, it is urged, that man's duties to himself must very largely grow out

of his relations to other beings, and must consequently include his duties to them. The second objection is in principle, though not in phrase, the same; viz., that every duty which we owe directly to others we indirectly owe to ourselves, inasmuch as if fulfilled it would promote, and if violated it would hinder, our personal moral culture and perfection. In familiar language, we are said to owe it to ourselves to discharge every duty which we owe to others. Similarly, every duty which would seem to affect ourselves directly and exclusively does remotely but actually fit us to discharge more satisfactorily our duties to God and our neighbor, and therefore becomes in a sense a duty to God *and* our neighbor. Every duty to either, as it is discharged or neglected, also becomes a means of moral culture to ourselves, and hence is enforced by a special obligation. Then, again, every duty, to whomsoever it is owed, is enforced by ourselves upon ourselves, and becomes in a certain secondary though important sense a duty owed to ourselves, so far as it is imposed by the authority of the individual conscience as final and supreme. It is also enforced, or rather re-enforced, by the authority of God, and consequently becomes a duty to God as well as to ourselves. In some cases it is re-enforced by the authority of those of our fellow-men to whom we happen to stand in special relations; and thus a single act becomes a duty to ourselves, to God, and to our fellow-men. These distinctions may seem over-nice, and perhaps merely verbal: yet they deserve attention in order to clear the subject from every possible misconception, and to put us on our guard against confusion of thought and of speech.

We sum up the whole matter in the following statements: Every duty is in an important sense owed, — to whomsoever, or on whomsoever it directly terminates, — and in some cases is a duty to more or fewer of our fellow-men. It is also always a duty to God. But inasmuch and in so far as our actions, including our purposes and feelings, immediately affect certain persons or things, we divide and classify our duties, as their direct

objects are respectively, (I.) ourselves, (II.) our fellow-men, (III.) animals, (IV.) nature, and (V.) God.

§ 152. We begin with our duties to ourselves ; because, for the reason already given, this class of duties includes the immediate and direct relations of our actions to ourselves alone, and their indirect results in our moral culture and habits.

Why we begin
with duties
to ourselves.

A correct judgment of our duties to ourselves will also enable us to understand and appreciate the duties which we owe to our fellow-men in their various forms, and their relative proportion and importance. The law which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves supposes or implies that we have already determined the kind and degree of love which we may render to ourselves ; not, indeed, the love which we render in fact, which would sanction our selfish achievements as a standard of duty, but the love which we ought to render, that is, an unselfish or moral love. The Golden Rule, “ Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” also supposes that our demands upon others for ourselves should be limited by some fixed standard concerning what we ought to wish or expect others to do for us, and implies some limitation to our expectations and wishes for and our interest in ourselves.

Our duties to ourselves and our fellow-men also furnish the principal, the most important, and often the only satisfactory criteria by which to determine and enforce our duties to the animated and the unanimated creation ; inasmuch as these duties are chiefly determined by man’s place in the finite universe, and the ends for which nature and animals seem to exist.

The consideration of these classes of duties will prepare us to understand the grounds of our special duties to God as the enforcer of all duty ; inasmuch as he enforces every duty by the rational sanction which he gives to each, and by the personal authority with which he makes every duty to others to be a supreme and personal service to himself.

Why, and in
what sense,
all duties are
duties to God.

I.

CHAPTER II.

DUTIES TO OURSELVES.—GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

§ 153. THESE duties have already been defined as those obligatory acts which prominently or exclusively affect man's individual well-being. They are derived from the principle that man is morally bound to choose, to feel, and to act, in such a way as to effect and attain the highest good possible for himself. In many cases, as we have seen, his volitions, feelings, and actions seem to terminate in himself only, even when they include the well-being of others. But, whether they do or do not extend beyond himself, so far as they affect himself they become duties to himself.

Subjectively viewed, they are limited to his actual or possible moral activities; i.e., to the acts and effects of choice. Thoughts, emotions, affections, and bodily acts are not duties at all, except as they are related directly or remotely to the will; while words and acts, when voluntary, may be as important duties to ourselves as are the inner feelings and purposes.

Objectively considered, those activities are binding which involve or promote man's highest good in character and condition, for the present and the future, directly or indirectly.

It should be remembered, — and for this reason the thought is repeated, — that man can never directly choose his highest good. This would imply that he chooses a choice, or a voluntary emotion (§ 28). Both are impossible. He chooses certain

objects, and in so doing he is bound to secure his highest good in the form of those desires and purposes which these acts of choice involve. The relation of the act of choosing, to the highest good of the individual, gives to it its moral character. Some of these choices and their results seem to terminate exclusively in himself, for good or evil; and hence such activities of voluntary preference or desire, of word or act, are duties to himself. These duties may respect his character or condition, according as they affect his feelings or states morally, making him a better man or the opposite; or, as they bring him some form of natural good, either psychical or material.

The duties which man owes to himself are sometimes conceived as implied in the precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as (*thou lovest*) thyself." If this interpretation is allowed, it deserves to be noticed that the love of self here required or impliedly sanctioned cannot be the simple (or constitutional) desire of happiness. Desire by itself, least of all the desire of an abstraction which can have no existence or impelling force separately from some one of the concrete forms in which it is exemplified, can have no moral quality whatever. Only a special voluntary desire can be right or wrong; i.e., a desire defined by some object, and, moreover, such a desire when vivified by the will (cf. § 32). Happiness as such, moreover, cannot be the object of either desire or volition. Happiness is a generalized characteristic of many of the emotions, so far as they include the element of desire, which always reaches after good.

**Self-love
defined.**

§ 154. The objective self which the precept requires us to love is pre-eminently and conspicuously *the moral self*. It is not the sentient, nor the affectional, nor the intellectual self, only, or apart, which we are permitted to love, but the voluntary and personal self; not the separate and selfish, but the social and self-sacrificing self: in one word, it is the human self, and this, not as it is, but in its ideal, i.e., as it morally ought to be. This self, in addition to its capacities and interests as an individual, holds manifold relations to its fellow-men and to God, to the future and unseen, as truly as to the present and sensible life. Hence the actual, much less the ideal, good of man as a single

**The objective
self is also
the moral
self.**

self, cannot be understood apart from man's relations to other beings. Man is a social, political, and religious animal; and his individual self is largely made up of his social, political, and religious capacities and susceptibilities. It follows that he cannot love himself as a moral person without respecting the affections and actions to which these social relations give rise, and which supplement his individual life. Separate from his fellow-men and his Creator, he is not a completed man, and can neither understand nor direct himself. He cannot know his own nature in the ideal which he should aim to realize by his individual, i.e., his voluntary activity, except as he includes in this ideal the relations which he holds to other beings in the place belonging to each, and the duties which he owes to them as truly as to himself.

It has, however, already been said, that there are duties which man is properly said to owe to himself, even though, in every single instance, these acts may be also owed to his fellow-men. The fact that such actions in their effects pass over to others, and therefore become duties to them, does not make them to be any the less really duties to ourselves, so far as they affect our happiness or our character. Sometimes the two relations conspire, and give a double or it may be a triple motive, and a complex character, to the same individual act. It often happens that the same act is at once a duty to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God. Frequently, moreover, the claims which arise seem to conflict, and leave us in doubt which should prevail, involving serious speculative and practical perplexity in deciding questions of duty.

Duties to ourselves, moreover, cannot be as definitely formulated and provided for by rules as the duties which we owe to others. They are often enforced by claims and considerations which are perfectly known to ourselves, and which, even if they were known to others, could only be imperfectly appreciated by them. The circumstances which determine and enforce them not being open to general observation and appreciation, they cannot

Duties which terminate with ourselves.

Duties to ourselves not easily defined.

be provided for so explicitly by rules as might be desired. Even the inductions and rules which one person might possibly derive from his own experience could not be applied by another, even to himself. The moral claims of certain persons upon others—as their parents, children, and neighbors—are often open to the inspection of many, and can be enforced by the common interests or the common sentiments of many observers. But the circumstances or feelings which are peculiar to an individual, and which are the grounds of the duties which he owes to himself, are often such as to be incapable of being justly appreciated except by the individual alone. No observer can put himself in the place of another man, and know what are his inmost needs. For these reasons, duties to ourselves are incapable of being as exactly defined and as satisfactorily formulated as duties to others. The utmost that we can do is to state and enforce certain general principles which may serve for our guidance in the direction of conduct and the formation of character, and leave their application to our individual experiences as they arise.

§ 155. We assume, as we may, that our duties to ourselves are comprehended and enforced by the general obligation to effect our highest good.

This highest good is broadly distinguished as *good of character*, and *good of condition*; the one describing what a man is in his personal, pre-eminently his moral self,—that is, in his purposes and affections; and the other, every thing besides, which he desires or possesses, whether it be knowledge and artistic skill, or wealth and power. Both these forms of good were distinguished by the ancient moralists in a general way, and both were recognized as essential elements of the *summum bonum*. The moderns ordinarily do not distinguish precisely between what a man is, and what he has, except in a moral sense; for the reason, that much that is attained by culture and discipline, in intellect and skill and grace, pertains to what he is, when contrasted with what he has in wealth or power or honor. We usually limit the good of character to moral excellence, and set this in contrast to every thing besides that is desirable.

Good of
character
and good of
condition.

We also distinguish good of every kind as immediate and remote, and find in this a factor or relation which ought to be considered. The divisions thus

Good of char-
acter always
supreme.

constituted by no means coincide with those of condition and character, and yet both classes of these relations determine many of our duties to ourselves. Immediate good of condition may not always be compatible with that which is remote, and it becomes our duty to sacrifice the one to the other. Good of character, however, is always supreme. It may never be sacrificed, either to present or future good of condition. Moral good should always be the controlling aim and law. It may be doubted, indeed, whether, in the strictest sense, any present moral activity has no relations to the future, and can therefore be said to be only of present obligation. It is certain, however, that, in the moral intentions, there can be no conflict between the motives of the present and the motives in prospect. Viewed in their relations to the future, the feeblest wish, the faintest aspiration, and the most casual resolve, may give energy to the character in warp and woof, and strengthen it to meet some future test or strain.

But let it be supposed that no ethical consequences will follow from a present moral activity, and that no relations to habit or moral growth are in question. Let a man be alone, and isolated from human society; let him find himself upon a desert island, or be immured in a solitary cell, and by the supposition left to control his thoughts and feelings without respect to any future consequences, even to his own moral self. Which of his impulses, in such a case, should he sanction and allow by his will? Obviously, those which are naturally the highest and best. These only are sanctioned by reason, or enforced by conscience, or commanded by God, as his present duties to himself. We say, in general, the psychical activities should take precedence of the sensual; and, of the spiritual, the benevolent should prevail above the egoistic, by their own natural superiority, provided no other claims intervene. This narrow example of a limited sphere or opportunity of duties to one's self supposes an original natural difference or gradation in the natural quality of the springs of action. That such a difference

exists, we have already assumed (§ 17). Were there no such difference, the more intense or energetic impulses would take precedence, and carry the day above the feebler or less active, by mere natural energy. That these differences of quality do not exclude a regard to remote effects and consequences, will be seen in its place. In this gradation of natural differences of value or worth, we find a rule of precedence for all those acts which relate only to ourselves, in the maxim, *The lower impulses may be indulged and allowed, so long as they do not exclude or interfere with the higher, either for the present or the future.*

§ 156. This example of duties to ourselves emphasizes the moral importance of a multitude of voluntary im-
 pulses, affections, purposes, and resolves, which are
 never expressed, or made effective by word or act.

Moral impor-
 tance of sim-
 ple emotions.

Their indirect effect upon the habits of thought and feeling, and their future influence, is indeed not unimportant; and herein we always find a reason for their supremacy. But apart from this, these voluntary impulses themselves, whether called the heart, the disposition, or the will, designate a constantly active and permanent state, varying in energy, yet ever the same. They constitute the good will of which Kant says, with so much simplicity and force, "There is nothing which we can think of, anywhere in this world, nor, indeed, anywhere outside the same, which deserves to be esteemed as good without qualification, excepting only a good will."¹ Hence the direction, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things." To possess and strengthen this good will, is the one constant duty of man in respect to character. To manifest and energize, by constant activity, a good will or a good heart,

¹ Es ist überall nichts in der Welt, ja überhaupt auch ausser derselben, zu denken möglich, was ohne Einschränkung für gut könnte gehalten werden, als allein ein guter Wille. — *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*.

is the comprehensive duty which man owes to his present self, as contrasted with, and yet including, the duties which he owes to his future self. It is the glory of the Christian morality, that it enforces this duty as supreme, and by requirements so strict and uncompromising; and that it recognizes, in the moral condition of the inner man, the centre and seat of all moral responsibility. But, while it thus makes the moral perfection and culture of the individual the supreme object of his active energies, it sets aside and discourages selfishness in any form by enjoining self-sacrifice and self-denial as the indispensable condition of attaining the highest perfection; its cardinal and most comprehensive principle being expressed in the words, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth it for my sake shall find it."

The best of the ancient schools, especially the Stoics, made the duty of perfecting one's self to be supreme and controlling; and in this respect they deserve to be compared with the Christian teachers. But while this duty was earnestly taught and recognized by many as the chief end of man, and under the motive that he might make himself worthy of the society of the ideally perfect celestials in the city of God, the excellence which was sought for was self-perfection for self-gratulation, rather than self-sacrifice for the good of others from love to others. It is true that Stoicism, in its honest allegiance to truth, recognized the humblest of men in condition as equal with the most exalted. But it rarely recognized or loved them as brethren; and hence, in its best type, it lacked the spirit of sympathy and pity, of humane and loving tenderness, for the realization of which the world waited so long. Hence Stoicism, with its self-culture, and as a consequence of it, often fostered a selfish indifference to the well-being of others, and found, in the contemplation of its loftiest ideals, an incitement to selfish and self-satisfied pride in place of a loving discipline to humility. That style of morality in modern times which is inspired by culture only, whether it take the Christian type of a Pharisaic interest in one's inner perfection as a ground of spiritual pride, or a selfish and absorbing care for one's eminent qualifications for the celestial rewards, or the unchristian attitude of independence of higher help for forgiveness or sympathy, is nearly akin to Stoicism, because it is self-absorbed, self-relying, self-satisfied, and in striking contrast with the flexible, self-forgetting, sympathizing, and self-sacrificing type of humanity which Christianity always proposes as its ideal, and so often turns into reality.

**Stoic and
Christian
self-culture.**

§ 157. But duties to ourselves are not limited to *the character*. They also respect the *external condition*; i.e., the health, the comfort, the knowledge, the accomplishments bodily and mental, the wealth, the reputation, and many other means of good which it is a man's duty to gain under the limitations and restraints which the law of duty imposes. These opportunities man is not only permitted to use, but it may be wrong for him to refuse to employ them. Good of condition or circumstances is not limited to physical advantages or the means of the same, nor to the means of gratifying the tastes, or even the social and domestic affections. It includes every thing which contributes to security or comfort, as reputation, security, property, whether these means or conditions of well-being are physical, intellectual, æsthetic, social, jural, or political.

Duties which respect the condition.

Duties that concern both character and condition also respect both *the present* and *the future*. Man can, to a certain extent, forecast the future in respect to his purposes and desires, as these may affect his future character and well-being, or in any sense determine his outward actions. Hence the relations of time become very important in determining questions of duty. A future result, whether of character or condition, so far as it is foreseen and consented to, is a present act, if not provided against. Man, as a being who looks before and after, cannot divest himself of responsibility for the future consequences of his acts, especially so far as these acts affect himself. If these consequences will certainly accumulate at an increased ratio, many actions, which might be indifferent for the present, are invested with the gravest importance for this reason, and this alone. A bodily, intellectual, or æsthetic activity or enjoyment may in its present results be desirable, and yet, in its future consequences to ourselves, be injurious to the interests and damaging to the character. An indulgence which for the moment is morally innocent may stimulate a natural appetite to such a degree as to render prob-

For the present and the future.

able an immoral indulgence when special temptations are presented. An innocent amusement, which would otherwise be innocent or even salutary, may for this reason become morally wrong.

§ 158. Hence the obligation to prudence, or wise forecast, reaches every feeling and action which may affect our future in respect either to character or condition. **Obligation to prudence.** It is not enough that an act or feeling may be harmless and even desirable in its present relations and effects, if it is injurious or even hazardous to the tastes, the temper, the habits, the appetites, or the desires, in the future, or if it anyway threatens evil to the reputation or the interests. The present aspect of any feeling or action should never decide any question, provided a wise and honest forecast can anticipate or even forebode any positive evil to the interests or character, which our judgment requires us to avoid. We do not say that evils which are feared are never to be hazarded. They are often not only to be risked, but to be manfully faced and defied. But if the conscience would not permit us to accept them for the present, no more should moral prudence allow us to risk them in the future; and this, whether the evil affects the character or the interests. Recklessness and foolhardiness is a gross offence against that forecast which invests man with his peculiar dignity, and in every form of improvidence is a sin against the conscience. Whatever fair forms of generosity, or trust in Providence, or unselfishness, it may assume, it is condemned by the honest conscience, as it is by the judgment of good men.

§ 159. The operation of *habit* is also a most important element in determining our duties to ourselves. The **Relations to the habits important.** fact that these laws act upon and within the constitution of the soul, under laws of necessity which can be foreseen, brings its operation and its foreseen results distinctly within the sphere of duty, and subjects it to the responsibilities which arise from freedom, when freedom is con-

nected with forecast. The law itself by which the present may affect the future is most beneficent in its design, and may become most salutary in its effects. By means of it, the voluntary character becomes fixed for good or evil. Through its operation, prudence is exalted into a moral virtue of supreme importance, and invested with the authority of a constant duty in respect to what may befall ourselves, and what we may become in character and power, or may effect with others by our example. For this reason, recklessness of the future in respect to any risk in character or condition, which may come from habits of evil, is a prime offence against one's self.

The duties which we owe to our future selves, so far as they respect what we may become under the law of habit and growth, are popularly designated as the duties of *self-education*, *self-culture*, and *self-discipline*. Each of these duties takes a special shade of meaning, according as the intellect, the feelings, or the moral nature are concerned. Self-education is usually, though not uniformly, limited to the training of the intellect; culture, to the training of the æsthetic sensibilities, or their expression; discipline, to the formation and direction of the motives. When special activities are employed for the single or chief end of subjective improvement, they might be called ascetic, from the Greek *ἀσκέω*. But ascetic and asceticism, as actually used, uniformly imply some special difficulty or obstacle to overcome, involving some reluctant or painful effort or sacrifice.

§ 160. Mere asceticism, in the unfavorable sense, practises and enforces the cultivation—or, as the case may be, the repression or mortification—of an impulse or habit, for the simple design of strengthening or weakening its positive and therefore its relative energy. It is analogous to the processes of physical training, by which a set of members or organs is artificially strengthened by special movements directed exclusively to this end. In both cases, the physical and ethical activity or endurance is directly assumed, simply

How des-
ignated.

Asceticism.

for the sake of self-training and discipline. When applied to moral discipline, it has been furthered and sanctioned by the Stoical theory that indifference to many gratifications, particularly those of a sensuous character, is an indication of manhood or manly self-sufficiency or self-control. **Christianity not ascetic.** The Christian morality has also been supposed to sanction what is called a "mortification of the flesh," or the denial of sensuous indulgences, for the purpose of training to the habit of indifference, or of superiority to sensuous and social pleasures, and to the amenities of art and culture. The superior attractions of the future life, the absolute obligation of Christian self-denial, the necessity of resisting evil in its most formidable and protean forms, and the uncompromising spirit of Christian duty, very naturally invested the Christian spirit with a stern aspect towards the Epicurean side of humanity, and led perhaps to an unnatural interpretation of its own ideal of human perfection. Hence great ethical importance was soon attached by many to a life of voluntary hardship and self-abnegation; and the highest sanctity has been attributed to such a life, especially when consecrated to the supposed service of higher, and pre-eminently to religious, aims and duties. The theory of asceticism in its principle is open to the following objections: In simple self-denial or voluntary suffering, except in the active service and exercise of a higher impulse, there can be no moral excellence. Self-inflicted suffering, when it is not required to accomplish some manifest good, is manifestly a sin against nature in every relation, and therefore against the laws of duty. What individuals need as a moral discipline, may be more safely trusted to a higher and better Master than assumed by ourselves, or imposed by others. The waste and sacrifice of good, and the rejection of it when it may be innocently enjoyed, would seem in its very nature and by its very terms to be an offence against the conscience, which obliges us to seek our highest well-being. It is also against the spirit of Christianity. Christianity, indeed, inculcates an elevated

spirituality in the tastes and aims, and a complete indifference to sensuous good as compared with that which is higher, as also a prompt and complete mortification of every sensuous impulse the instant it threatens to become sensual, and a martyr-like courage in facing suffering and death for the Master or his cause. But Christianity also teaches the cardinal truth, that the end of conquest over evil is to strengthen the love of the good. It is by faith in that which is fitted to satisfy and fill the soul, that the better impulses become triumphant, and temptation is overcome. Its lesson is, "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

§ 161. Ethically considered, the decisive objection against asceticism is, that it overlooks the duty of stimulating the higher impulses, which alone can make any discipline successful, or reward it by a habit of good. In the mere endurance of evil, or abnegation of good, there is no moral excellence, and there may be selfishness which is cruel and malignant. The self-denial and self-culture which are not sustained by that cheerful sacrifice which a fit occasion stimulates and elicits are in danger of being weak, heartless, and reluctant, if not selfish, hypocritical, and proud, simply because such discipline is unnatural. Enforced gymnastics of every kind are in constant danger of being tedious and heartless. Enforced gymnastics in self-culture are almost certain to become so.

**Objection to
asceticism.**

Asceticism in its spirit and theory fails for two reasons. It overlooks the truth that life itself, in the circumstances of which it is made up, is appointed for us by a Master who is wiser than ourselves, and with the express purpose of exercising his pupils in the methods which are best fitted for their needs. This discipline, as we may suppose, involves all the self-denial and patience and self-control; all the pain, the mortification and grief, which are required for the best good of each individual. If the pupil imposes on himself new and special tasks which

the Master does not require, he usurps the Master's place. Acting in this spirit, he will be in danger of losing sight of the end in the means, and fail to make his costly self-denials and painful disciplines serve to any result except his self-complacency and pride. Asceticism in the service of philosophy or religion has often miserably cheated itself of the end which it proposes to achieve. It has distorted the culture and impeded the usefulness and blighted the lives of multitudes, in the name of temperance, virtue, and religion. The germs of it were distinctly recognized, and as distinctly repressed and disowned, in the early Christian Church; but they have not been wholly exterminated, and never will be as long as human nature remains what it is. Hence, in recognizing the duties of ethical self-culture as supreme among the duties which man owes to himself, it should be carefully distinguished from every ascetic strife against nature, and the painful denial of the rights of man to innocent and healthful indulgences.

The various questions which constantly arise in respect to amusements, tastes, and enjoyments, seem all to be settled by the two mottoes: "Every creature of God is good if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer;" "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." The first secures our individual liberty and rights. The second teaches us to regard the feelings and judgment of others in a wise but not a servile spirit; in the temper of cheerful self-sacrifice, but never of unsympathetic intolerance.

CHAPTER III.

DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THE BODILY APPETITES AND
THE BODILY LIFE.

§ 162. THE appetites are those of food and drink, of rest and sleep, and of sex. They depend on the bodily constitution for their excitement and energy. More Appetites characterized. exactly, they pertain to those endowments which we call the psycho-physical, in which body and soul suffer and act together, by laws which are as yet imperfectly determined. As psychical experiences, they are engrossing and imperious when excited by the presence or thought of the occasions or objects which address or stimulate them. Some of them — as hunger and thirst, weariness and tendency to sleep — can be controlled only to a certain extent, when the bodily condition arouses the impulse, and requires its gratification, or yields to its power. The bodily health and life also require that these appetites should be controlled in respect to the manner and extent of indulgence, in subjection to other desires, largely the prudential so-called, which are confessedly superior to those which are corporeal, and are designed to regulate and control them.

The sexual appetite has for its immediate object the transmission of life to other individuals. Its indulgence is not indispensable to the health or life of the individual whom it excites and impels. It is not irresistible in the same sense as are hunger and thirst; for it can be controlled by withdrawing

the attention from the objects and thoughts which would excite it, in a sense and to an extent which hunger and thirst do not permit. This desire, more eminently than other appetites, is capable of being associated with the most elevating and unselfish affections, and superadds to the promotion of the ends of animal existence the noblest accompaniments, in the affectional, moral, and spiritual training and character.

§ 163. As direct experiences of the conscious spirit, the gratified appetites differ from the other sensibilities in that their gratifications are necessarily of short duration. So soon as hunger and thirst are satiated, the possibility of further indulgence is excluded for a longer or shorter period. The enjoyment of the most luxurious feast cannot be indefinitely protracted, even by the most elaborate refinements of cookery, nor even by the most varied diversions of social intercourse and intellectual or artistic excitement. Sleep will not continue forever, even to the savage who is engorged by gluttonous excess or a sensual debauch. This single fact reveals at once a discrimination between the sensual and other enjoyments, as limited, and for that reason as inferior. This inferiority of itself indicates, that, in the economy of nature, sensual is inferior to other good.

It is also most obvious to human experience, that the capacity for what are called the more enduring or permanent of human enjoyments — as, for example, for social, intellectual, and æsthetic gratifications — depends on the bodily condition, and that this is directly dependent upon a strict and regulated control of all the bodily appetites. This circumstance, which is one of the first lessons of individual experience, inculcates a sharp and positive lesson, of prudential if not of higher obligation, that the appetites were designed to be held under control. Nature, as we have already seen, enforces upon every man this law: So soon as the indulgence of any appetite in kind or degree defeats the end for which such appetite exists, or was provided, that indulgence is forbidden by the law of duty.

This law is absolute so far as the appetites are regarded as conditions for the bodily health or life. Whether the health or life may not, under certain circumstances, be hazarded or sacrificed from higher motives, we do not here inquire (cf. § 176).

§ 164. If we leave these prudential considerations out of view, and regard the appetites and their gratification as affections of the conscious spirit, we may safely apply to them the following axiom: Sensuous gratifications, when brought into competition with intellectual and emotional pleasures, are inferior in quality and worth. The man who seeks his highest good must in every such case set aside that which he knows to be inferior. The case supposed is one in which the man is shut up to the direct comparison of the two opposing impulses, unclothed of all associated emotions. More commonly some reason or excuse for sensuous indulgence suggests itself in its production of some near or remote benefit to body or mind. But, in any case in which the conflict is simply between the two, that which is known to be of the highest natural worth must prevail under our general formula of duty; and this law is at once enforced with moral authority upon the consenting judgment.

Compared
with the
other sensi-
bilities.

As has already been asserted, the present comparative worth of two conflicting impulses will rarely be the only relation in which they solicit the choice of the will. It rarely happens that the most animalized of men conceives his pleasures as simply animal experiences. There is wrought into almost every bodily indulgence or solicitation, even to the most sensualized, some association of memory or imagination or hope, which takes somewhat from its animal grossness, and thus breaks the shock of a direct collision between a higher good and a gratification which is purely animal. Let such accessories be wholly removed, and the essential inferiority of that which is simply beastly is revealed more distinctly to the honest judgment of every man.

§ 165. The relation of the animal indulgences to the future is **How related to the future.** the most important element in deciding their claims to indulgence. Like all the psychical impulses, they obey the general law of habit. This general tendency is intensified by their special capacity to gain a tenacious and exclusive hold of the imagination, unless they are kept under constant subjection. Their hold of the memory, and intrusion upon the imagination, are doubtless owing to a peculiarity of the psychophysical in man, by which, as affection or desire, it increases by indulgence in tenacity, capacity, and impulse. The fact cannot be denied, that no other solicitations can come into competition with those which address the senses of the man whose memory and imagination have become thoroughly sensualized. The glutton, the drunkard, and the debauchee not only for the time being exclude the higher sensibilities by those which are inferior, on those occasions when opportunity and appetite tempt to gratification, but they limit their capacities and tastes for other enjoyments when opportunity and desire for these are wanting. Even then the imagination becomes possessed as by a sensual demon, which never ceases to suggest images and scenes that are gross and foul. As a consequence, all the movements of thought and fancy become essentially sensualized; and the man himself, in impulses and associations, is permanently debased in the world of imagery which so largely makes up and constitutes his inner self.¹

Special limitation to the appetites. § 166. The appetites are subject to the general law of habit; under which, repetition gives a keener capacity to the sensibility, and a more energetic impulsiveness to the desires. Under the operation of this law

¹ "But when lust

By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk, —
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin, —
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies and imbrutes till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being."

alone, it would follow, that given any energy or direction of the will, or the presence of any permanent volition, the repeated indulgence of the obedient sensibilities must augment in a heightened ratio the relation of the tempting to the resisting motive, and increases the improbability of any change (§ 34). In the animal passions, this ratio of increase is augmented by the pathological fact that the physical or physiological basis for the gratification of any impulse is diminished in its capacity for action, while, as indulgence is repeated, the imagined gratification serves to stimulate the unsatisfied desire. While it is true generally, that novelty gives a special zest to gratification, it is eminently true of the animal passions. In this we find another indication that these impulses were intended for subjection, and never for supremacy, whenever a conflict arises between them and man's higher nature.

While it is true that the law of habit holds of all the sensibilities, it is eminently true of the so-called animal propensities in man. If, in the psychical, the rate of increase is arithmetical as the consequence of repetition, in the animal it is geometrical as indulgence is repeated, and the hoped-for gratification stimulates unsatisfied desire. Then, too, as the desire is stimulated, the capacity for gratification is diminished in the opposite direction; and consequently the gulf widens more and more between rapacious passion and the means of its satisfaction.

§ 167. A theory directly the opposite of this is held more or less distinctly by not a few men of culture of the present time. These teach that animal indulgences of every kind, when looked upon in the light of science, are as truly elevated as any other; and that "the rehabilitation of the flesh" in its original rights, as against the narrow and envious teachings of priests and philosophers, is one of the solid achievements of modern science, and one of the flowery garlands of the æsthetic philosophy of life. The rough common-sense of the man of the world, and the refined taste of Christian philosophy, reject with dis-

**Alleged
dignity and
rights of the
appetites.**

gust such a theory as untrue to nature, and degrading to humanity.

It would seem to be sufficient to reply to this theory, that duties to ourselves respect the future as truly as they concern the present. Questions concerning our duties are not entirely disposed of when we have decided that a feeling or an act is for the moment innocent or even wholesome for ourselves. It not infrequently becomes our duty to consider what will be the future effect or tendency of any act or emotion, if we yield to present solicitation. This holds good, in a degree, of every act or impulse, but especially of the bodily appetites, whose very nature is so imperious, that, unless they are constantly restrained in imagination and act, they tend to become the easy and the undisputed tyrants of the man who asks for but one more harmless indulgence. From being gentle and plausible tempters to this single indulgence, they are exalted into the cruel masters of the enslaved will, which exact an endless repetition of compliance; the will being none the less enslaved because the dominion is felt to be the more abject by the repeated humiliation of a ready and even passionate assent every time that the temptation re-appears. That this is the certain and inevitable operation of all the animal desires, is early made apparent to the experience of the most thoughtless and headstrong. It may be observed in infancy and childhood, by those who are least instructed and most feebly disciplined. The fact or law is made apparent to every one who feels any obligation of duty in its most indefinite and feeblest forms. From this obvious fact is derived the acknowledged duty, in all our actions and feelings, to respect the law of habit; in other words, to own it as a duty to ourselves, in every form of activity, to regard the reflex influence of every act, be it thought or desire or purpose or outward deed, upon our future selves.

§ 168. So far as a man is aware of the relations or effects of a present indulgence or act with respect to his future, so far does he consent to its operation for the future, and include it

and consent to it along with the present. Not only does he take upon himself all the moral responsibility of his present act, but of what is morally certain in the future, unless some important change occurs in his underlying character. Every present indulgence, when taken with this known risk and probability, involves the moral acceptance of this risk. The boy or man with a growing appetite, or an appetite which he knows is likely to grow, for liquor or impure imaginings, for gambling or envy, for revenge or petty thieving, for discontented repinings or impious distrust, anticipates and consents to like offences in the future, so far as these are involved in his present act. In this way each separate act becomes emphatically an affirmation of the character as a permanent state of the will, which in its turn energizes and confirms the character.

How far a man is responsible for the future.

While this is pre-eminently true of all the bodily appetites, it is so conspicuously of the appetite for intoxicating drinks and the opium-habit. Indulgence of either, except under the rigid and fixed restraints of high moral purpose, brings with itself, to a majority of men, the strong probability that the appetite will sooner or later gain the mastery, and that, either at a slow or rapid rate, its victim will become the bond-slave of a passion that will muddle his brain, weaken his judgment, wreck his affections, and withdraw him from the confidence of his fellow-men. Whether it is true or not that the use of ardent spirits as a constant beverage is physiologically injurious, it cannot be doubted that this use is morally hazardous to the great mass of men; and, for this reason, no man is justified in such use who does not make out for himself a special case for exemption. It follows that every man owes it as a duty to himself to abstain from such use, irrespective of any obligation of example or other social relations to his fellow-men, unless he can show a decisive reason to the contrary.

What is true of the appetite for intoxicating drinks is true of the sexual passion. This impulse needs special control for the

present and the future, with respect to the internal and external habits, because of the peculiar prominence which the imagination has in its temptings to evil, and the facility with which indecent literature lends itself to the service of debauching the imagination, especially of those youths who are as yet unaccustomed to its suggestions of evil.

These considerations explain the ethical foundation and import of the petition, "Lead us not into temptation." The prayer is itself an act of forecast, which seeks protection against future moral evil, and against any exposure to such evil by agencies and solicitations which shall be stronger than the unaided moral powers or purposes. Every man who honestly utters this prayer will certainly allow nothing, by his present activity or indulgence, which he knows will add strength to the solicitations of future evil.

§ 169. The social aspects of the appetites cannot be overlooked, even in the consideration of man's duties to himself. As has already been explained, his nature as a social being enters into and forms a part of his human nature, and gives a special force to the duties which he owes to himself. The appetites are all eminently self-centred, and are necessarily exclusive, and, in a certain sense, repellent of the claims of the appetites of other men. If undisciplined and unrestrained, they easily lead into open disregard of their interests and claims, if not into open assaults upon them, in insulting manners or violent deeds. Obtrusive greediness in eating and drinking naturally gives offence, even when there is enough for all. Any bodily pre-occupation, whether pleasurable or painful, much more in forms that are extreme, — as of heat and cold, starvation and thirst, — presents the strongest impulses to some unhandsome neglect or forgetfulness of our fellow-men. This exclusive and self-centring power is fearfully illustrated in conditions of man's great extremity, as in shipwreck, and exposure to impending death. This natural tendency is enormously increased when an appetite is voluntarily accepted

**Social aspects
of the appe-
tites.**

as the master and tyrant of the man. Gluttony, intemperance, and licentiousness are notoriously selfish and cruel when they become acknowledged and absorbing passions. Let them encounter a rival or a foe, and their subject and victim becomes not only a brute in his degradation, but a brute in his cruel hate, if disappointed or opposed in his gratification. No fact is better attested by universal and obvious experience, than that the appetites not only trample into the mire the most tender of natural affections, but that they inspire man with fiendish hate towards those who would reform or resist his brutish impulses.

§ 170. By observations of this sort, made quickly, uniformly, and early, every man who is willing to learn is taught that his animal impulses are made to be controlled. Some, if not all, of these teachings are enforced by that natural sense of shame which may literally be called "the modesty of nature." Not a few brutes possess a kindred sensibility in a rudimentary form. In man it precedes and enforces the teachings and experiences of nature and society, and is itself re-enforced and sanctioned by these teachings. Hence *modesty* becomes an ethical duty, a law and sanction of character and conduct, of actions and manners, pre-eminently when these are concerned with the animal appetites. To cultivate and practise modesty, in every one of its forms, is a constant duty to one's self as a habit of prime importance, an investiture at once of strength and beauty. Just in proportion as the public conscience recognizes and enforces moderation and modesty, the individual conscience responds with the intellect and the heart.

§ 171. It follows, that every man owes it as a duty to himself, to indulge his appetites under the limits and restraints imposed by a fundamental regard to his bodily health and life, and stimulated by the humanizing influence of those nobler affections of his nature which are the natural accompaniments of bodily indulgences, and at once elevate and restrain them. Every man should eat and

The appetites
made to be
controlled.

Natural re-
straints and
corrections.

drink like a man, and never like a brute ; neither imprudently nor greedily, neither selfishly nor immoderately. When he eats and drinks with his fellow-men, he should do it with the charity, modesty, and courtesy which recognize them as men and fellow-men, but never as brutes. In this way the appetites, instead of being hinderances, are aids to our higher culture. Instead of finding in them merely animal indulgences, or temptations to immoderate and abusive excesses, we may find in them an exaltation and refinement of the spirit, a victory and self-restraint, a discipline of manners and taste, and an enlargement of love and charity. To have eaten at one's table, or partaken of one's salt, is, with many tribes, to have given and received a pledge of confidence and friendship. A single meal with free and generous hospitality is often made the beginning of an intimate companionship.

It should be remembered, that the most offensive and brutal perversion of the appetites conceivable is not that of the unreasoning animal, nor of the half-animalized man who gives himself up in mere stolidity to the instincts of his bodily life ; but that of the ingenious and inventive man who uses the resources of his ingenuity to enlarge the range, to disguise the evil, and to make seductive the charms, of what would otherwise be repellent and gross and offensive. Not a few go farther, and selfishly and fiendishly use the affections which were designed to elevate the appetites, as the means of murderous seduction, and a palliation for their own selfish and beastly degradation. They may even employ the social amenities which were designed to discipline man to self-conquest and self-abnegation, as the instruments and channels for the most fatal and enduring of injuries. They may misapply the resources of art, and the attractions of manners, and the amenities of literature, and the excitements of song, to palliate, to stimulate, and to conceal the grossness and cruelty of animal indulgences. The higher the culture, the more various the resources, and the more refined the tastes, of the man who yields himself deliber-

ately or habitually to intemperate excess or sexual vice, the more definite is his own sense of the loss of self-control and consequently of self-respect; and, the more exasperated is his anger against his fellow-men who reprove or repel him, the more complete is his devotion to the appetite for which he has parted with so much that he may well desire to retain.

Sexual vice takes many forms, from that of the weakling youth to that of the cultivated and accomplished seducer, who endeavors to reconcile the refinements of æsthetic sensibility with a devotion to lust, to gallantry, or seduction. Should we say nothing here of the murderous quality of seduction when it is considered as an offence against a confiding victim, we should only emphasize the quality of self-murder which belongs to it as a sin against one's self. However difficult it may be to explain the peculiar demoralizing influences which attend habitual licentiousness, it is not easy to deny the truth of the lucid and emphatic testimony of Dr. Paley: "However it be accounted for, the criminal commerce of the sexes corrupts and depraves the mind and moral character more than any single species of vice whatever" (*Moral and Political Philosophy*, book iii. part iii. chap. ii.).

The testimony of Burns is no less true because it is eminently pathetic.

"The lowe o' weel-placed love
Luxuriantly indulge it,
But never tempt the illicit rove,
Tho' naething should divulge it.
I waive the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard o' concealing;
But, och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling."

Epistle to a Young Friend.

Conviviality as a comprehensive term has its good and bad moral side. Used in its good sense, it dignifies and tempers the merely animal enjoyments and excitements of food and drink, and employs taste and beauty in the decorations and service of

hospitality at family meals and at social entertainments, and tends to repress animalism by means of social and æsthetic appliances. On the other hand, drinking and festive songs are often expressly designed to excuse or justify the excesses which attend many social indulgences. Prurient and salacious literature, in its manifold forms of *double entendre*, of broad and piquant humor, of subtle or gross allusions, in its favorite plots which turn upon seduction and adultery, furnishes abundant opportunity for the heightening and justification of unlawful passion, and the corruption of the individual and the community. The duties of a man to himself in these particulars are not easily separated from his duties to others, inasmuch as the former re-act upon the latter. It cannot be questioned, that every individual does something in giving a right or wrong direction to these subtle agencies. Every man also suffers more or less in his own moral tastes and habits from those tastes and habits which he helps to form, or does not seek to reform, in the community. Whether or not he owes no duties to others in a social way, he owes something to himself to assert his own convictions, as well as to correct and purify the atmosphere of public sentiment and manners which he himself must breathe, whether he will or not.

§ 172. The questions concerning the duties of individuals in respect to the appetites have always, and especially of late, been complicated by the consideration of their responsibility for others, which has been made prominent by reason of the earnest movements against the vice of intemperance in the use of alcoholic liquors. These movements have naturally led to active discussions, in which *physiological* considerations have been mingled with the principles of individual liberty and social duty; and these, again, with inquiries in respect to legislative duty and responsibility, and all for the determination of ethical questions.

One of these questions forces itself upon our attention at this stage of our discussion. The objects of the appetites in-

volved are threefold, — intoxicating, stimulating, and narcotic. Pathologically viewed, they affect the soul in its animal susceptibilities in various forms and degrees of excitement and depression, which are followed by a great variety of impulses and desires, some of which are degrading, and tend directly to vice of every description.

As a consequence, it is contended by many, that every solid and liquid which is not nutrient should be rejected except for medical uses ; that stimulants, and perhaps narcotics, should be rejected from any other use, and should be guarded and forbidden to the community by legislative enactments. We do not discuss the question at this place, of the morality of using these liquors on grounds of public safety or public policy. We simply ask whether it is immoral to use a stimulant or a narcotic as such, because the appetite for such a substance is not natural, but artificial ; and whether this is further corroborated by the circumstance, that the object of it is a stimulant or narcotic. It is enough to say that the principle proves too much ; inasmuch as it would forbid the use of tea and coffee, which seem to consist of elements that stimulate the nerves, as well as nourish the stomach. To this it would be replied, that they are at least nutrient in part. Some would respond to this assertion, that, in the opinion of some physiologists, this is true of alcohol. This question may be assumed to be not yet determined.

It would seem, that so long as this question of fact is not settled, — i.e., so long as the evidence on either side is not obvious and convincing to men of ordinary observation and judgment, — the obligation to abstain, under all circumstances, from the articles of food and drink which are in question, cannot be maintained. However tenable may be the reasons for total abstinence from all liquors which intoxicate, on grounds of personal exposure in their habitual use, or on grounds of public welfare, the duty cannot at present be enforced on the ground that it is morally wrong to use a stimulant as a beverage.

**Special duties
with respect
to intoxicating
liquors.**

§ 173. The duties which respect the appetites carry us over to those which relate to the health and life. We have already seen that we ought to regulate the appetites with reference to their effects upon both. This implies, that, within certain limits, we are morally responsible for our health and life. This truth is usually recognized without dissent as an axiom in morals. The reasons for accepting it need, however, to be carefully considered, especially in view of the perplexities and conflicts which attend the discussion of special practical problems.

Why, then, ought men to promote their health and prolong their lives? Is it simply because they desire both? But they do not always desire either; at least, with any considerable energy. Does the obligation to care for either weaken or fail with the relaxation and extinction of these impulses? The very utterance of these questions would intimate, that, though the desire of life may not be the simple and sole explanation of the duty, it may have much to do with its existence and its enforcement.

§ 174. We find, then, the desire of life to be the most tenacious and comprehensive of all the so-called instinctive impulses. We mean the desire of bodily well-being and life, for it originally takes this form and no other; inasmuch as man in the earlier stages of his being knows no form of existence as an object of knowledge or desire other than those which are dependent on the body. Even when an incorporeal life becomes a familiar object of his faith or hope, the body is always so near and so vivid as to fill up the foreground of thought and feeling; and the ties which bind us to it are tenacious beyond any comparison with others. The desire to be healthy and strong, and to continue to live on our bodily life, remains with almost unabated freshness and vigor. The prolongation of life is largely placed within our power, and in a sense committed to our keeping. We know that if we choose we can cut it short,

Duties which
respect the
health and
life.

Tenacity and
strength of
the desire of
life.

or endanger its continuance. Why do we not often end it, especially under impatience, suffering, or disgust? It may be that we never really desire to do so, even when we half persuade ourselves that we do. It is far nearer the truth to say, that we do not feel at liberty to end our life, even should we desire it. In other words, we read in the prevailing desire, strong and unconquerable as it is, the expressed command of reason that we should struggle and strive to live as long as we may. We confidently interpret this struggling and tenacious impulse to cling to life, as expressing the purpose or law of our being, that we should avoid all reckless and needless exposure to sickness and death. We also regard the bodily life and health as a trust committed to our care. Both elements of proof suppose an economy of nature, including living beings as mutually related, the relations of which may not only be discerned by man, but which his reason is compelled to interpret, finding the authority of law in the purposes of nature, and the arrangements to meet and fulfil these conspicuous ends. If this economy of nature is supplemented by a thinking and willing person, these adaptations express the law which his will enforces. Viewed in these higher relations, the care of our health and life becomes a personal trust assigned and enforced by the Supreme.

§ 175. In point of fact, the true value of human life and the sacred duty of respecting it has never prevailed where theism and Christian theism has not been a living faith. The obligation to conserve one's own life has never been generally and earnestly acknowledged, except where its value has been revealed by the light reflected upon man's interest and destiny, from the supposed sympathy and care of the Father of spirits.

**Value of
human life
under
theism.**

Among the brightest and strongest of the ancients, suicide was not only tolerated, but it was considered an act of both heroism and humanity. Thinking men asked, Why should not a man be brave enough to terminate his own life when it had

become a torment and a burden to himself? Why not go out of the house when the chimney smokes? Why, also, should he not be considerate of the comfort of his friends when his life had become a burden or torment to them as well as to himself? To accept this conclusion, and to act out this faith, was deemed the wisdom of the profoundest and the most courageous philosophy, and sometimes as the height of the most heroic and disinterested philanthropy.

Contrariwise, under the theistic view, the act of suicide is **Criminality of suicide.** prematurely to desert the post of duty, and to betray one's trust. It is to contravene the will of nature and the God of nature, by a self-willed and conceited judgment of our own. Christian theism, moreover, inculcates the endurance of suffering as a discipline of patience and trust in the wisdom and will of Him who makes a life of profound suffering a necessary preparation for a better life of confirmed perfection and unalloyed blessedness. To the argument, that to cut short one's own life, especially in poverty, helplessness, and suffering, may give relief and rest to others, the reply is pertinent and decisive, that we may not presume to judge of the healthful discipline which others may require in their sympathy and toil for us.

Apart from this reference to the economy of nature and the government of God, it is not easy to find any decisive argument against the rightfulness of suicide in cases of extremity. That suicide is essentially cowardly, is answered by the counter assertion, that it is often more cowardly to avoid it; that it is inhuman to others, by the argument that to refrain from it may be more cruel; that it is presumptuous to decide such a question beyond the possibility of a revisal, by the reply that to refrain is to decide, and that such questions must, in the nature of the case, be adjusted by the weight of probabilities in every individual case.

§ 176. *Imprudence in respect to the health, and recklessness in exposure to danger, are morally wrong, because foresight in*

respect to any interest or trust that is committed to our care is an imperative duty. The guilt of imprudent negligence in such cases is measured by the importance of the interest which we risk, and the strength of the motives which we overcome. It follows, that the more clearly and fully one man, or many, discern the conditions and laws of health, the more imperative becomes the obligation to regard them. The more generally men are informed concerning the conditions of a protracted and healthful earthly life, the more sacred becomes the obligation to fulfil these conditions. The sanitary laws and conditions which respect the person, the dwelling, the neighborhood, the village, and the city, are clothed at once with moral authority, so soon and so far as they are discovered and established.

Imprudence
and reckless-
ness.

It should be remembered, on the other hand, that the preservation and prolongation of the bodily life is not a supreme end. There are many things more desirable than the continuance of one or many lives.

Preservation
of life not a
supreme end.

Fidelity and boldness in the attestation of our convictions, the preservation of the lives of others, the defence of personal purity and honor, the protection of the helpless and the endangered, the defence of one's home and country, furnish occasions when the risk and sacrifice of the personal life are not only permitted, but enforced by the sanction of conscience and of God. Under the stress of immediate danger to one's friend or neighbor, or under the inspiration of a great movement for a good cause of religion or patriotism, a man may be more than justified in hazarding and sacrificing his health or his life. It is not easy always, perhaps not even possible, to give rules or criteria by which our actions in extreme cases are saved from the charge of reckless exposure, and exalted to the dignity of heroic virtue. Nor is it easy to draw the line between an example of prudence and foresight, and an instance of reckless self-sacrifice. Questions of duty are not always easily brought under any definite formula amid the more prosaic scenes of life ;

much less when the circumstances are perplexing, or inevitable haste and excitement preclude the possibility of deliberation. The greatness of what are called the heroic actions of life is often illustrated as much by the sagacity which discerns the necessity of an occasion, as the self-forgetfulness which meets it promptly and bravely. To judge with coolness, and that discrimination which can decide wisely when it is necessary to risk life and health and fortune, and which can wisely use the means which are requisite for success, is often as conspicuous an indication of heroic virtue as any headlong forwardness to meet a risk or sacrifice. It is idle to vex ourselves with questions of conscience as to what we may find it necessary to decide concerning our duty in case a serious crisis should break upon us which might require some extraordinary energy of virtue. It is equally idle to sit in judgment upon the wisdom or folly of those sudden resolves of other men which have seemed to be the extremity of rashness. Rules and parallels fail in such trials. Each case can only be decided by itself.

It is safe, however, to say, that self-regarding prudence is not always the supreme duty. The conditions of health and comfort for individuals and communities are now so generally understood, and so rigidly enforced by public sentiment, that there is some danger that a selfish care of health and comfort should take the place of the heroism of self-sacrifice. In some circles of scientific thought, pity is openly denounced as a weak sentimentality, and brutal expedients for the summary disposal of the suffering classes are openly recommended. It is grateful to observe, on the other hand, that, as more is learned of the conditions of personal and public health by the light of sanitary science, more generally is the obligation acknowledged to care and sacrifice for both. The outbreak of every local pestilence not only awakens an instant inquiry in respect to its causes, but it summons to activity a band of self-sacrificing men and women who take their lives in their hands as nurses and helpers to the sick and the dying. The variety and per-

fection of hospital appliances would seem to indicate that the obligation to care for the life and health of others is more and more cordially assented to. There are also necessary and honorable occupations, the animating law and spirit of which involve an habitual disregard of health or life as supreme, and in which the ordinary respect to either is openly set aside as dishonorable and immoral. The military and medical professions, which, in a certain sense, set off from different starting-points, and move towards different goals, must often involve and require what in others would seem to be a criminal disregard of life. The paradox is easily explained from a high ethical point of view, that the countries in which human life is most sacredly esteemed and most sacredly cherished, because God is feared, and immortality is most confidently believed, are the countries in which human life is most deliberately hazarded and most heroically sacrificed for the cause of humanity and of God.

§ 177. The right to life is indeed the most sacred of all rights, and in a sense inalienable (§ 199), even by the subject of it, and eminently sacred against invasion by any other human being. It is the most sacred of all rights, because it is the supreme condition of all human enjoyment and activity. If life is not secured, nothing else can be enjoyed as one's own. It therefore may never be parted with through caprice, or at any other call than the call of duty. It may be forfeited in the interests of moral order, by punishment for crime. There is, moreover, no such intrinsic sacredness in human life as forbids exposure or sacrifice in a good cause, when there is sufficient reason for its being hazarded or given up. The martyrs of learning, of liberty, and of religion, would all protest against such an exaggerated and idolatrous view of human life, in one united cry from beneath the altars of their voluntary self-devotion. The cross, the sacred symbol of earthly sacrifice for the highest interests of others, utters its decisive protest, as it attests,

**In what sense
the right
to life is
inalienable.**

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

And yet, for all this, it is none the less true, but the more, that the romantic, the heedless, the reckless, the sentimental hazarding of life, whether at the sick-bed, in the study, in athletic sports, or on the battle-field, is sternly forbidden, as alike unfaithful to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God.

CHAPTER IV.

DUTIES TO OURSELVES WHICH RESPECT THE INTELLECT.

§ 178. EVERY man is morally obliged to cultivate and improve his intellect. So soon as he awakes to conscious activity, he finds himself ignorant, yet capable and desirous of knowledge. Though he may be conscious of partial darkness, he is awakened and stimulated by the dawning light. To know gives him pleasure, and the experience of this pleasure awakens fresh curiosity. From the lowest form of bewildering wonder to the highest forms of scientific insight and inventive skill, to enjoy this pleasure is not merely morally lawful, but, so far as it consists with other enjoyments, is morally obligatory. It is the duty of every man to secure to himself these higher enjoyments of intellectual activity and acquisition, and to sacrifice to them inferior pleasures. The intellectual life is superior, at least, to the animal life; and it adds a peculiar zest, even to the highest forms of emotional and moral delight. For these reasons, if for no other, man owes it as a duty to use his intellect in the best manner and for the best results. Intellectual acquisitions and powers are also capable of augmentation and growth. Nothing is better established in our experience and observation, than that any considerable degree of intellectual power or acquisition can be gained by discipline and effort, and by these only. Whether the gains are of truths or facts, or whether they consist in facility of any kind, they come of training only. Growth in intellect, in the double form of knowledge and

Natural
impulses to
knowledge.

power, is as natural, and almost as necessary, as the existence or activity of the intellect. Indeed, activity and intellectual effort are invariably followed by growth; and, with the use of the one, there come the conscious possession and achievement of the other.

§ 179. Moreover, intellectual activity and incidentally intellectual growth are the indispensable conditions of attaining many objects or ends which are confessed to be desirable. To succeed in most of the aims of life, man must have knowledge and skill, both of which require guidance, attention, and effort. Whether the intellect gains in knowledge, or gains in power, it is only by active and well-directed labor.

Knowledge and intellectual power are also the conditions of usefulness. If a man can help others by imparting to them facts of which they are ignorant, or guidance which they require, he must thus far have trained his own intellect. So soon as a man awakes to these conditions of his individual and social existence, he cannot but discern and respond to the obligation to inform and discipline his intellect as a constant and important duty.

Men universally enforce upon one another this duty. They hold each other responsible for the neglect of intellectual activity and culture. They require of men of ordinary intelligence and opportunities, that they should learn the obvious conditions of bodily health and comfort, the recognized precautions against sickness and death, as also attention to decency of manners and speech. For gross and wilful ignorance in respect to these points, under the usual conditions of civilized life, men hold each other responsible. So far from accepting stolid or wilful ignorance as an excuse, they treat it as itself criminal.

The individual sometimes goes farther than society in recognizing the duties of intellectual activity and training. Even if society does not openly condemn or ostracize a man who is

thoughtless in his speech or behavior, he sometimes condemns himself most pitilessly for his stupid inattention, or his long-indulged indolence, as the occasions of his crimes or blunders. The more distinctly he reflects, the more clearly he accepts the general principle, that every man is morally bound to use and train his mind so that he may acquaint himself with those conditions of individual and social welfare, for which he is properly made responsible.

§ 180. Besides the sphere in life which may be said to be common to all men, and for which men are held responsible, at least in civilized society, almost every individual finds himself in some special position of activity, which is more or less clearly defined, and which he occupies for a longer or shorter period of time. This sphere is to every man a limited sphere, even when it is most widened. The broadest intellect, and the most variously cultured, is still circumscribed in its range. Whether this sphere is characteristically scientific or practical; whether the individual man is a laborer whose range of special knowledge or activity is limited to the pickaxe or the spade, or a scientist who can predict the place and movements of the stars, or record the successive phases of the universe, — each man must concern himself with a comparatively limited number of facts and relations, and must content himself with mastering these solely by intellectual effort. The place of activity which every man finds or makes for himself in the social economy is limited to certain facts and activities, to meet which, with the highest success, is his foremost duty. He cannot do this unless he masters the facts and trains his powers to the habits and skill which such a sphere requires. To do this is the foremost duty of every man. Often it seems to be his one comprehensive duty. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say, that for many men, and in some sense for all men, the sum and substance of their duties to their fellow-men is comprehended in the precept, to perform faithfully the duties of their special calling in life.

Each individual has a special sphere of duty.

But this involves the duty to understand the facts and perfect the habits which are requisite for the discharge of these duties. To do any work well, a man must understand his work and understand himself. Each of these involves intellectual activity and training.

§ 181. For all these reasons, the community imposes heavy responsibilities on a man who professes any art or profession for which he is not trained, and to which he has not given sufficient attention, or for which perhaps he has barely sufficient capacity to know whether he is or is not qualified to practise it. Whether a man proposes to sweep the streets, or cook a dinner, or build a bridge, or direct a steam-engine, or sail a ship, or heal the sick, or preach the gospel, or expound a science, if he is ignorant of what should be known or done in the occupation of any of these positions, and does not know how to do it, he is condemned as a deceiver of the community, even if in some sense he is self-deceived. He is held at the courts of the law and at the court of public opinion to be responsible, even when his ignorance is so gross as almost to relieve him from the suspicion of moral responsibility. In some of the arts and professions, quacks and pretenders are not unfrequently subjected to prosecution and punishment for malpractice. The only limitation to this resort to the juridical law for the protection of the community is found in the difficulty of conviction by any tests which the courts can apply. The fact that the law holds man accountable for culpable ignorance, whenever he is convicted, is the only point which is of any ethical importance.

To most men, as we have said, there is assigned by the necessities or circumstances of their condition some special sphere of activity for which a more or less definite training is required. The duty of such persons is obvious, to meet these demands by training themselves to intellectual and manual skill. The arrangement is beneficent by which, in civilized communities, special duties are assigned to particular individuals, involving a

The community holds a man to his profession.

concentrated and continued subjection to special discipline. By the same rule, the few who are supposed to be specially favored in being exempt from this necessity or obligation should supply themselves with its substitute in some special form of activity selected by themselves. Those who are not compelled to derive their subsistence from any of the arts or professions should select some definite occupation for which their tastes or judgments predispose them, in order that they may gain the habits and culture which a profession or occupation involves. This duty is not limited to one of the sexes. For the same reason, it is often for the interest, and often becomes the duty, of those women who are released from domestic duties, to find some constant and invigorating occupation of art, or benevolence, or study, that their minds may be brightened and stimulated by a course of progressive activity and sustained enthusiasm.

While, for the reasons already given, we give prominence to the duties which each man owes to his profession, we would not overlook the fact that his power and success, within his calling, are often effectually promoted by exercising his intellect upon subjects-matter that lie without its limits. So far as this is true, so far does the profession itself gain by now and then being forgotten; and one's special power is invigorated and freshened by those facts and relations which are remote from an ordinary, and too often a mechanical, routine of activity. Narrowness of intellect is often as unfriendly to the best intellectual achievement and success within a special sphere as is a want of concentration. But while a liberal and generous culture of the intellect is always a duty, so far as it is possible, it should always be remembered that one's first duty to his fellow-men is his duty to be master to the utmost of the knowledge and skill which his business or calling requires. The great majority of the failures in success and usefulness in life are to be ascribed to slackness and indolence in preparation for the callings which men profess. Slackness and indolence are therefore intellectual defects, which rightly estimated are always sins, and often become crimes.

§ 182. A special class of intellectual duties are those which concern the ethical convictions and principles. We distinguish between the convictions and principles thus: The convictions are the intellectual beliefs, whether or not they can be verbally formulated or logically proved; the principles are the same as stated and defended. The special obligation to employ the intellect in ethical uses is derived from the importance, especially to a

**Intellectual
duties re-
specting
ethical truth.**

man of general intellectual culture, that his ethical views should be made the subject of thought and reasoning as truly and as thoroughly as his convictions in respect to any other subject-matter. Ethical truth is also confessedly the most important of all truth. Clear and convincing as may be the light which illumines it, the light may be intercepted and weakened by withdrawing the attention, or indolently or passively accepting a specious argument in its place. The man of common-sense who takes his opinions upon trust, without attempting to analyze the statements, or scrutinize the arguments, may perhaps, with comparative safety, deal with ethical truth as he deals with his other beliefs. But the reasoner or logician, the scientist and the philosopher, who uses the power of a trained and cultured intellect upon other subject-matter, and does not employ it upon the evidence for his faith in conscience and the moral law, may find himself taken at disadvantage when he attempts to dispense with the reasonings which are required in the statement and defence of the law of duty, including its religious sanctions. Hence the importance, not to say the necessity and the commanding duty, that every man should employ his intellect upon ethical truth as an object of supreme interest, and train and discipline his intellect so that it may justify and enforce his ethical convictions.

CHAPTER V.

DUTIES TO OURSELVES WHICH RELATE TO THE FEELINGS AND THE HABITS.

§ 183. THE feelings or emotions may be treated as simply inner experiences, beginning and ending with ourselves alone, or as manifested and expressed in word and act. The former, again, may be conceived as leaving a permanent impress on the soul itself, or as leaving no trace upon our inner being. Strictly interpreted, no emotion — certainly no voluntary emotion — can be supposed to be purely transient and ineffective. Every inner activity, though manifested by neither word nor act, may be supposed to tend to be more or less permanent, or at least to contribute towards a tendency to return for good or evil, and thus to reach forward towards some future volition. Even though this were not the case, the regulation of the feelings would be a duty which we should owe to ourselves, did our feelings concern or affect no one besides. The better or higher affections should invariably exclude the lower, whether they do or do not affect the future.

Subjective
effects of the
feelings.

The opportunity for this class of duties is far wider than is commonly supposed, and their ethical importance is far more serious and important. Many of the most significant of our indulged emotions, so far as our character and well-being are concerned, are never expressed in word or deed. They may never be felt as a force in the physical or social economy, and yet in respect to character and responsibility their significance

may be transcendent. For this reason they come directly under the law of duty. The precept, and the reason for it, are summed up in the words, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

§ 184. The rule is twofold: Give room and play to the best emotions, whether natural or moral, because of their intrinsic worth. Do the same more emphatically because, whether good or evil, they gather strength for future return by voluntary indulgence. A man owes it to his present self, to give room and play to his best affections when he is shut up to the solitary indulgence of feelings of any kind. He owes the same to his future self, as subject to the law of habit, and as certain to grow weaker or stronger in the desires and impulses which constitute and control his moral life. This law of habit holds of single emotions and desires so far as any activity gains strength and force by repetition; and also of the combination of any two in a joint experience, so far as this becomes the ground of the spontaneous and forcible recall of either at the suggestion of the other. The duty of prudence, or the obligation to regard one's future self, is emphatically enforced with respect to the regulation of the feelings, pre-eminently those impulses which by indulgence ripen into tyrannical habits. How compactly and inextricably the web of associated feelings and desires may be woven, and with what energy they bind the strongest wills, is known to multitudes by their happy and unhappy experiences. Few crimes have been committed in outward act which had not previously been consented to in inward imagination or by sinful desire. The thief, the murderer, the adulterer, the liar, ordinarily has often committed the offence in thought which he subsequently enacts in word or deed; or, if he does not beforehand give a formal consent to the foul deed, he gives headway and impulse to the desires and passions which at last gather strength enough to break through the strongest barriers, and what was matured as the inward will breaks forth as an outward act.

General rule
in respect to
the emotions.

§ 185. The energy of the emotions and desires, of the longings and repulsions, of the loves and hatreds, of the envies and generousities, of the trusts and revenges, that have never been expressed in word or deed, is known only by those who have had experience of them. It is but the sober truth to say, that this energy has often, by reason of the absence of restraint and reproof, surpassed that of any emotions which have been expressed in word or deed. For these indulgences, time and opportunity are always ready, and secrecy may always be complete. Correction or displeasure from those who are most feared and respected is withdrawn. The imagination may riot in the images and fancies, the remembrances and hopes, and even the falsehoods and dreams, which often stimulate the passions with greater energy than the scenes of real life. The feelings aroused by the fancy or memory may ripen into those inner habits which largely constitute or determine character.

**Importance
of the emo-
tions that
are not
expressed.**

It follows, that neglect or watchfulness may be exercised in the voluntary indulgence or repression of vicious desires, or the fostering of emotions which are elevated and noble. Nothing but the habitual indulgence of hidden emotions and vicious desires can explain many sudden outbreaks of crime which seem so inconsistent with the tenor of the previous outward life. Very frequently they are confessed or discovered to be but the final yielding or breaking-away of external barriers before a swelling tide of passion or falsehood which had been accumulated by the secret indulgences of years. George Eliot writes thus in "*Romola*:" "Tito was experiencing that inexorable law of human souls, that we prepare ourselves for sudden deeds by that reiterated choice of good or evil which determines character." While it is true, on the one hand, that the full expression of our feelings in outward actions, and, so to speak, their consummation by words or deeds, intensifies their energy; it should be remembered, on the other, that the best and worst emotions may be

**Strength of
inward
habits of
feeling.**

indulged in perfect concealment, and be repeated a thousand times, when there is not a single opportunity for speech or action. In such cases, the restraint from the anticipated displeasure or opposition or reproof of our fellow-men may be wholly withdrawn, and nothing hinders or checks the emotion save inward self-control under the law of duty or the fear of God. The frequency of opportunity, the concealment, the absence of restraint, all combine to give to the habits of feeling which are formed in secret an immense importance in the formation of character, and the practice of self-culture by which character is achieved.

§ 186. On the other hand, the act of cherishing pure and unselfish emotions by inner habits goes far to strengthen the character in every thing that is good and noble. The crises of great temptations, the inspiration of a noble opportunity, rarely meet us; and the manner in which each is met when it presents itself very often depends on the inner associations which have been previously woven from the finest threads of thought and feeling, such as only the fantasy can spin. The great battles of life and character follow the fortunes of the manifold little conflicts of temper and trial which constitute the inner history of every living being.

It should be remembered, however, that, whether inwardly or outwardly, we cultivate and train the feelings by means of the objects which excite them. We cannot feel by wishing, or even by willing to feel, though we may wish ever so ardently and will ever so strongly. To feel in any form or direction, we must give our attention to the objects which excite feeling, whether these objects are persons or things; whether they are scenes in nature, products of art, colors or sounds or forms, noble or hateful actions, characters or sentiments, words or deeds; whether fancies and purposes, or living men and actual deeds. These objects we must not only attend to, but retain and respond to, judge of,

approve or condemn, and then by inward volition accept or reject.

§ 187. We have already noticed the relation of *habit* to the *appetites and the bodily life*. But there are also habits which are purely *psychical*, and pertain to the so-called desires, as of property, honor, esteem, etc.

Habits of
certain
desires.

The first which we name is the passion for *gambling* in any of its forms. This passion is in many respects unlike the bodily appetites. It assumes many forms, as betting on cards, the speed of horses, the strength of men, the issue of athletic contests, the fitfulness of stocks, or the results of an election. It is unlike a bodily appetite in not depending on the psycho-physical in man; being founded not on an appetite, but chiefly on the desire of property or pecuniary gain or some other desire technically so called. We say chiefly, for the mere desire to win as a feat of forecast contributes somewhat to the excitement of the contest. But, though unlike a bodily impulse in its basis or germinating nucleus, it is like it in its capacity for its tenacious hold on the feelings and its rapidly accumulating strength. It owes both of these elements of tenacity and consequent danger to its capacity to occupy and interest the imagination, and to excite the passions of hope and daring and self-confidence, by mimic contests of the fancy, and by the striking contrasts between its exciting experiences and the sober facts and occupations of pains-taking labor and self-relying industry. The man who gives himself to occupations of this sort as an occasional indulgence is in imminent danger of indulging impulses which he will not be able, because he will not desire, to relinquish. The excitement of imagined success as truly disturbs the imagination as a physical disturbance disorders the brain. Cool heads are nearly as rare under the one excitement as under the other. The rapid suggestion of unfounded hopes and fears, and the exclusion of the consideration of the sober truth, are as really unfavorable to clear judgment and wise

Gambling.

action as is the frightful din of disturbing sounds or the bewildering glare of ten thousand colored lights. From this very bewilderment of uncertainty, the mind strives to free itself by more and more energetic, and it may be desperate, throws and ventures, till "the play is out," and the sequel is any thing but a play. The glitter and glare are over; the capacity for excitement is exhausted after a brief season perhaps, or at most after a few years; when the victim of the demoniac passion finds himself either ruined in fortune, or, in the rarest of instances, retires to an uneventful, because an uninteresting, life, in which prudence or necessity forbids him to enjoy his accustomed excitements except on the smallest and meanest scale. The reformed gambler is as rare a phenomenon as the reformed drunkard, and for this reason the insidious beginnings of gambling should be avoided as truly as the habits which ripen into

Gambling in business. inebriety. The reckless and unprincipled risks assumed in what is called legitimate business partake more or less of the nature of gambling, and are acknowledged to be fraught with evil to the individual and the community. It is not so often noticed that they are also morally injurious and degrading to the man who yields to them, inasmuch as they involve whatever is morally evil in *the demoniac passion*. The desire for wealth is not wrong; the accumulation of wealth by lawful efforts, not only of labor but of forecast and skill, is not only not a sin, but is often a duty and a virtue. But the habit of gaming degrades a man into the abject slave of his passionate wishes and romantic fancies, and condemns him to live in the unreal world of excited visions, which he continually persuades himself to be solid facts, and is continually forced to find are deceitful dreams. The habits which lead to this wretched life of illusions are insidiously formed, and for this reason their beginnings should be scrupulously shunned by every man who makes a conscience of any duty.

Speculation defined.

§ 188. What is called *speculation*, whether in stocks, or grain, or provisions, or any other article of invest-

ment, use, or trade, involves the evils of gambling, when no delivery is proposed of the articles which are said to be bought or sold, and the bidding or guessing or betting respects only the market-price at some future day. To buy any thing in order to sell at a future day, or to promise to buy at a future day, is a legitimate act of hazard and forecast, provided the goods are paid for by the capital or the credit of the buyer or seller, and are actually delivered. But to promise to buy or sell, without the sobering and steadying process of paying on the spot by cash or note, diminishes the responsibility of the dealer in just the proportion in which the cost of an actual purchase and delivery differs from the amount which is pledged “to cover one’s differences.” It is not wrong to use sagacity in anticipating what the state of the market will be at a future day, in respect to any article whatever, or to buy or sell accordingly what you may have in hand, or may be certain you can buy; but simply to make a prediction, and to pledge, it may be, all your capital or credit in ten or fifteen per cent of an estimated future market-price, tempts men to irresponsible ventures, without those sobering restraints of reality which the responsibilities of actual payment and a *bona-fide* purchase alone can impose. It involves all the elements of imaginative excitement and irresponsibility which make gambling so dangerous when it becomes an occupation and a passion.

Speculation is ordinarily, and perhaps always, far less dangerous and desperate as a habit than technical gambling; because it is connected with many legitimate transactions for delivery and investment, and also because it is conducted by not a few men of large capital, and under rules which are in the interests of fair dealing, actual risks of foresight and knowledge, and prompt settlements. It is also managed in open day, and in the presence of a crowd of disinterested spectators who would neither “break a bank” nor “cheat at cards.” And yet, with many an individual, the occupation degenerates into what is nothing better than gam-

Less dan-
gerous than
gambling
proper.

bling. Sometimes, after a series of unsuccessful operations, the transition is very rapid into a desperate and incurable habit of tricks and effrontery, often involving a cruel indifference to the interests of others, and an easy morality of deceit. The excitements of such a life not infrequently leave behind them a miserable residuum of vacant horror and misanthropic regret to those who have been tempted from the occupations of legitimate trade, and have thus made sure a gloomy close to an embittered life.

§ 189. The same objections hold good of ventures in *lotteries* of whatever description; the evils of which have been so generally recognized, that, in most of the States of our Union, they are forbidden by law, and dealing in lottery-tickets and ventures is severely punished. A striking change in public opinion in respect to the morality of licensing lotteries, and dealing in lottery-shares, has been effected within two generations. This change is made conspicuous by the adoption of the opinion, with many conscientious people, that all appeals to chance, or any use of the lot to decide any matter, are morally wrong.

Not a few such persons are greatly disturbed at the use of *lotteries*, or *raffling*, in *benevolent or religious fairs*, for the reason that it is of the nature of gambling, and gives a religious or ethical sanction to fascinations that are wholly evil. It may be and doubtless is true, that such practices foster tastes that are frivolous, and possibly are worse; but it seems idle to contend that all appeals to the lot are immoral, or that the distributing of an expensive gift by the purchase of shares need offend the conscience. Let the following be supposed: A benevolent person proposes to give, for a benevolent use, — as for a hospital or a church, — a valuable painting, or piece of furniture. It will not command in the market a ready sale. The owner offers it for the price of thirty tickets, each of which is within the means of many persons who would be willing to give the cost of a ticket to the good cause,

and are not unwilling to enjoy the anticipation of possibly drawing the prize. Were this system to be introduced into the economy of daily life; were raffling to become frequent, and were it known to be attended by the disastrous consequences of gambling, — the duty to avoid the act because of its tendencies towards an easy and dangerous habit would be obvious and unquestioned. But when no such danger exists, to insist that an act is wrong because of its possible affinities with a habit to which neither the individual nor the community is immediately exposed, is to fall into the weakness, and not infrequently into the narrowness, of Pharisaism, which attaches greater importance to the appearance than to the fact of evil. It may still be a question, how far, in such cases, we ought to consider what purport to be the weak consciences of others.

§ 190. Of *habits in general*, as related to the feelings, we may also say, that a servile and unmanly fear of performing an act of trivial significance lest it shall be matured and hardened into a habit, or lest it should weaken the force of a habit already formed, is to be avoided by every one who would use wisely this most important agency in the formation and confirmation of character. Strong as is the force of habit, and important as is the necessity that we should be constantly alive to its power for good and evil, it is possible to become its slave, and, in so doing, to fail of the best uses to which it can be applied. To be afraid to deviate from an action when duty and affection both summon us to make an exception, lest a desirable or persistent habit should be interrupted, is to set up a mechanical rule in place of a living principle. It is to show an unmanly distrust of ourselves and the resources of our own moral life, and to lose sight of the most important conditions of the highest form of moral life, and the living spring of a self-relying moral character. The spirit of the strongest and most trustworthy servant of duty is a spirit of freedom from every description of bondage except the willing bondage of love, which forgets itself in its

**Habits as
related to
the feelings.**

quick response to any call of duty, to our fellow-men more readily than to ourselves.

§ 191. Self-inspection for the purpose of revising and judging of our emotions, whether by an intellectual, social, æsthetic, or moral standard, hinders culture so far as the attention is withdrawn from the objects which excite feeling. When it occupies the energies to the exclusion of the objects which should call them forth, it produces a deadlock in the soul which is often fatal to healthy activity and actual progress. Whenever, in the glow of feeling or under the impulse of desire, the soul, being filled in the mean time with the object that sways its emotions, is diverted by the question whether its feeling is right in quality or energetic in degree, a new object is interposed which introduces a new feeling, whether of pleasure or pain, of hope or fear; and if it does nothing more or worse, it at least interrupts the activity of the soul, and breaks the force of a germinant habit, simply by interfering with the spontaneity of nature.

Introverted and self-suspecting natures suffer immensely from arrested or misdirected development, by such unnatural processes as these. Especially do sensitive and morbidly conscientious persons, whose standard of excellence is high, and who apply this standard so often, and with such painful anxiety or unnatural rigor, as to give no opportunity for the development or training of the feelings under the natural conditions of strength and growth.

§ 192. Habits such as these lead to *asceticism* of the emotions; which may be defined as a morbid or artificial method of self-culture, which especially exercises the feelings simply for the sake of making them stronger or more obedient, especially by mechanical and even painful manifestations or repressions. Asceticism seeks to weaken a too strong desire by first exciting and then denying and disappointing it, instead of bringing in one that is higher or nobler. It tempts to ambition and lust, to pride and envy, that

Self-inspection, when useful, and hurtful.

Asceticism of the feelings.

it may furnish an occasion for mortifying and crucifying these emotions ; instead of inciting and strengthening self-sacrifice and charity by the motives which would fan these impulses into a flame. It studies artificial methods of arousing right feelings, and repressing wrong ones ; instead of seeking out those objects and scenes and opportunities which would stimulate and satisfy and mature the better impulses, and exclude and repress those that are inferior. It rushes upon severe and painful trials, that it may work out some heroic achievement, even if the trial proves stronger than it can bear ; and forgets the spirit of the petition, *Lead us not into temptation*. It is manifest in æsthetics, in manners, and in morals, and often degenerates into a fanatical and factitious heroism. As such it is characterized by the common feature of seeking culture by sundry artificial experiments and methods, in place of the ordinances and methods of nature, and the relationships and duties of human life.

Sentimentalists of all sorts are a species of ascetics, whether they expend their energies of feeling upon imagined objects, or train themselves to unnatural intensities of emotion for the luxury of woe or pity or grief, of love or hatred. The artificial character of modern social culture, the affectations of modern literature, the intensities of modern fiction and poetry, tend to train imaginative persons to accept artificial and unnatural standards of ideal perfection, which can never be realized, and which consequently become a torment to the weak and morbid souls which aspire after what the nature of man and the conditions of his earthly existence can never give. Hence perpetual disappointment, weariness of life, disgust with mankind, groundless self-reproaches, settled melancholy, and not infrequently the insanity of suicide, or perhaps a cynical and hateful pessimism, — an artificial disease which seems to have been generated wholly from modern culture and literary tendencies, and to have been subsequently formulated into a philosophy of the universe and of human life.

Sentimental-
ists a species
of ascetics.

CHAPTER VI.

DUTIES OF MAN TO HIMSELF, WHICH RESPECT HIS WANTS,
HIS RIGHTS, AND HIS MORAL CLAIMS.

§ 193. EACH individual man, by the nature of his own individuality, has separate wants of body and spirit, to the supply of which he is impelled by original impulses of instinct and rational desire. For this supply is dependent in part upon himself, and in part upon his fellow-men. In order to avail himself of either of these sources of good, he must employ his own activities. The possibility of supplying his separate wants in consistency with a benevolent regard to others is indicated by the arrangements of nature, and may be assumed as an axiom in morals. It is also an axiom, that it is salutary for himself to supply his individual wants, whether in separate or joint action, by means of personal industry, foresight, and skill. To burden our fellow-men with the responsibility of supplying those wants which we might meet by ourselves, is not only a selfish wrong to them, but is an offence against our own well-being.

The infant and the simple-minded help themselves to food and shelter and warmth, very much as does the animal, that is, without either reflection or forecast. As their knowledge of means is developed and becomes more complicated, and their conception of ends becomes more distinct and vivid, as they forecast the possible supply of similar wants in the future, they are impelled to provide against them by ampler and more varied provisions and efforts. But, inasmuch as during infancy and early childhood others more or less abundantly supply their present and future needs, they are tempted selfishly to rely on others for the continuance of such

Every man
has individ-
ual wants.

Men natur-
ally supply
them, and
aid one
another.

service. The conflict of impulses, in this as in other cases, raises the question of duty, whether and how far the individual is morally bound to depend upon himself. This question, like most others, is determined by the intentions of nature, which are partly manifested by certain original desires, and partly by certain universal institutions or common relations of human society.

The wants of men include all those conditions or means on which their physical, intellectual, social, and moral welfare depends, and which, in a sense, may be said to be essential to man's well-being. These must vary with the peculiarities and conditions of each individual, with his individual habits, his culture, and his social position. The conditions of a single and satisfactory physical existence are few, and are more or less readily attained under favorable social surroundings. We cannot overlook the fact, however, that in consequence of social inequalities, defective education, bad government, and bad religions, it is often not easy for millions of the depressed classes to supply themselves even with daily bread. Whatever other duties may be obligatory, under these circumstances, it cannot be questioned that every man, in whatever condition he may find himself, is morally bound to use all the industry and foresight which he can employ for the supply of immediate and pressing wants like these.

One of the first lessons which nature teaches man is, that he can neither live nor thrive in any particular, without personal effort of body and mind; that, if he neglects himself altogether, he will starve and die; and, similarly, that if he does not care for those higher wants which he discerns however darkly, he must suffer. If he allows the possession and impulses of any natural capacity to interpret to him his duty, he will feel and acknowledge the obligation to labor and think, and provide for himself. If he does not discern and assent to this obligation by his independent reflections, he will ordinarily learn it from certain sharp enforcements from his fellow-men, which will compel his attention, and to which his aroused moral judgment will confidently respond.

The supply of these wants involves labor of body and mind, according to the nature of the good which is concerned. It

**Meaning of
wants.**

**This supply
involves
effort and
skill.**

involves foresight founded on an experience which may rise to acute and prophetic sagacity. It implies skill which is trained by both failures and successes. Hence labor, sagacity, and skill become duties which are more or less imperative according to the nature of the results which depend on their exercise, and the capacity of the individual to learn from experience.

To refuse to supply our own wants, is also to wrong our fellow-men by selfishly imposing on them the labors and sacrifices which we might accept for ourselves. It is also to wrong ourselves by yielding to solicitations to indolence, carelessness, and cowardice. No man can rightfully rob himself of the advantages which attend and follow self-reliance, forecast, and labor, or shun the responsibilities which are involved in caring for one's self.

The duty of self-reliance supposes health of body, and force of mind, and more or fewer favoring social conditions. So far as these are absent, a person is exempt from the otherwise constant and inexorable duty of helping one's self. When these fail, the duty of self-help takes another form, and becomes self-control, patience, and contentment. The impulse or principle which prompts to self-dependence with labor and forecast, so long as labor and forecast are possible, then takes the form of using the resources which still remain in inward activity, cheerful thoughts, a hopeful spirit, and a contented mind. The self-relying man in health who is such from a sense of duty, often learns to possess his soul in exemplary patience when he becomes dependent and helpless.

§ 194. The supply of many of the wants of men implies the existence of *property*. Property implies social existence in an organized and usually in a complicated form. It supposes that the means or sources of supply for our human wants are defined and fixed by permanent criteria and social conventions. Of the duties of men to recognize the right of property in others, and to respect the institution of property as permanent and sacred, we shall treat under another title (§ 220). At present we have to do with the duty which men owe to themselves to acquire and possess property as a means of supplying their wants.

Supposes
property, and
the duty of
acquiring it.

There is a special reason for asserting this duty, in the more or less extensive prevalence of the doctrine, that, though it may be morally right for a man to possess and acquire property, yet it is not a man's duty to do so; or, at least, that the duty is exceptional, and rests only upon a few whose circumstances make the obligation manifest. The question consequently becomes interesting and important, Is it a duty for men in ordinary circumstances to spend less than their income? To this question, it would seem, there can be but one answer. If it is a duty to use prudence and forecast from one day or one month to another, it is a duty, so far as it is possible or consistent with other obligations, to provide against disability or illness on the part of one's self or one's dependents. The possibility of doing this enforces the duty. The importance of so doing is enforced by the experience of privation and dependence by others who suffer for lack of industry or foresight.

**This duty
called in
question.**

§ 195. A special exception from this obligation is supposed by many to be not only excused, but enforced, in the case of those who are expressly devoted to religious or educational or philanthropic services. Such persons, it is urged, are under special obligations to give evidence of their disinterestedness, and in this way to gain the special confidence of their fellow-men, by the formal abnegation of property. No exception is here taken to the morality of any voluntary vows of poverty, or other forms of self-abnegation by which men and women cut themselves off from the supply of many of the wants which ordinary morality not only allows, but sanctions. We concede that such vows may be not only lawful, but are in certain cases highly praiseworthy, and indicate superior disinterestedness and an unselfish devotion. Our inquiries are limited to those who assume the ordinary social obligations, and yet regard themselves as excused by their profession or calling from the duty of that self-reliance for themselves and dependents in the future, which a wise prudence would inculcate.

**Certain
classes of men
supposed to
be exempted
from this
duty.**

To all general rules of external conduct, there are many individual exceptions such as justify themselves, and also support the principles of the rule.

There are, doubtless, many cases in which devotion to a great and worthy object of science, invention, philanthropy, or religion, justifies an elevated and heroic insensibility to the obligation to provide against future want. The heroes and martyrs of science and art have found their justification in the splendid and useful services which their discoveries and inventions have wrought for their fellow-men at the cost of such voluntary self-abnegation. But it should not be forgotten, that self-reliance and self-respect are also sentiments which are of inestimable value, and that these are favored by pecuniary independence, and often require it when it can be achieved by industry and forecast. Such sentiments are often conspicuously illustrated, indeed, in men and women who are oppressed by poverty, to whom poverty has come in spite of frugality and self-denial; but they are not so obvious in the case of those who are reckless of the future, and contemptuously disown the obligation to accumulate by small savings from an income which makes such savings possible. This is especially true in a young, as contrasted with an old, country; a country in which progress and hope give tone to the community, in which fortunes are sometimes rapidly made, and pecuniary disasters are soon forgotten or replaced. Certain classes of men are especially exposed to this failure of duty. Skilled mechanics, clerks, teachers, and professional men of all classes, are tempted by their manifold tastes and aspirations to disregard those higher obligations of independence and self-respect for themselves and their families which enforce the duties of economy and thrift in acquiring and securing a property of one's own. Hence it may be safely inculcated as a serious duty, that every man should possess a home and estate of his own, however small and humble these may be.

§ 196. It is thought by many, that the teachings of the New Testament and the spirit of the Christian ethics are unfriendly to the possession of property, and are especially inconsistent with the accumulation of large estates. Some Christian preachers and moralists inculcate doctrines of this sort, and hold up the examples of those who impart as fast as they acquire, as more truly Christian than those who become or remain very rich. Many pointed and emphatic teachings of the New Testament in respect to the comparative worthlessness of riches, and the supreme obligation to abandon them at the call of duty, are interpreted as incompatible with the acquisition or retention of great wealth. The sudden and uncompromising demands now and then made by Christ in his lifetime upon this and that pro-

**Supposed
teachings
of the New
Testament.**

fessed disciple, to abandon or sell his fortune, are supposed to be of universal and literal obligation, and to furnish the ideal or type of Christian duty in its highest form.

It hardly need be repeated, that these declarations and commands should be interpreted like the other teachings of the New Testament (§ 136) ; viz., as the assertions of general principles which respect the purposes only, rather than as universal precepts which are to be applied to the conduct. The supremacy and the energy of the purpose are, in this case, insisted on with uncompromising severity, and are exemplified by its unsparing application in the forms of external action. The extremest suppositions are made of the acts and sacrifices which the precepts of duty may involve. On the other hand, the institutions and relationships of human society are as distinctly recognized in the Christian morality, and the duties which these imply and enforce are solemnly enjoined. The cardinal virtue of righteousness or justice is enforced most emphatically, and the ethical authority of property is thereby uniformly sanctioned and enforced.

§ 197. The duty to possess and acquire property implies *the right to property*. This introduces the subject of *rights in general*, and the duties which every man owes to himself with respect to his separate rights as an individual. The duty to recognize and concede the rights of others, as also the relation of rights to duties, falls under another category, and will be considered in another place (§ 214). We assume that there are other conditions for individual welfare which hold a place similar to property with respect to man's well-being ; that each man must enjoy these conditions for himself, and feel himself secure in them, in order to his highest good,—in which are included social enjoyment and comfort, the prolongation of life, with exemption from annoyance and injury on the part of others. Of these essential conditions to human welfare, the secure possession and enjoyment of property are one example. Assuming that

The right to
property.
Rights in
general.

there are such rights, we limit ourselves for the present to the condition of the duty which every man owes to himself to assert, enforce, and defend his individual rights.

If our conception of a right is correct, it follows that every man owes the duty to himself, in ordinary circumstances, to assert and defend his rights, pre-eminently those which are natural and inalienable. If a man is morally bound to choose in purpose and to realize by act his highest good, and if there are external goods which are essential to this end, he is morally bound to make these his own, and to secure them permanently to himself. The proposition is self-evident, because it is identical and axiomatic. This rule, it will be observed, however, does not specify the means or methods by which man may define or assert these rights.

In every organized society, special methods are devised and provided, by which these rights can be defended. Governments exist very largely — in the view of many, they exist solely — for the purpose of rendering this service. *Two cases are supposable, which may arise in the application of this rule. The first is, when the government is able and willing to defend these rights; the second, when the government is unable or unwilling to render its service or aid.*

§ 198. In the first case, it is the duty of every individual, by the aid and through the agency of the government, to assert and defend his rights; for the reason that security in these fundamental conditions of well-being is a necessity to every man which he is bound to assure for himself. If the injury is trifling, the good man may forgive or overlook it; but if it is serious and repeated, no man can be true to his duty to himself who does not secure himself against injury and wrong by personal self-protection or legal precautions and redress. Assaults upon the person, attempts against the life, theft and injury of one's property, should be prosecuted or punished by the law; and the man who

General duty
to assert and
defend our
rights.

By aid of
the govern-
ment if
practicable.

suffers should avail himself of the law, for the security and redress which the law proposes to give. The same may be true of the invasion of other rights than these; but the obligation is not so imperative as in respect to the most of these prime conditions of comfort and safety. A man may not necessarily fail in his duty to himself, who does not enforce his rights of inferior import; but the man cannot ordinarily be true to his own interests, nor to those of his fellow-men, who does not avail himself of every legitimate method to punish any gross and palpable invasion of his fundamental rights; to say nothing of his obligation indirectly thereby to defend those of the community.

There are not a few who adopt the opposite extreme; who, in the case of the invasion of their so-called natural rights of person, property, and life, assume the responsibility of repelling and punishing the invader without the instrumentality of the law, on the ground that all invasions of rights of this sort should personally be repelled or punished. The fallacy of this reasoning, if it be reasoning which they use, is obvious. Law is enacted and enforced for the very purpose of taking the place of personal self-defence, with its uncertainty, its haste, its passion, and its failures in equity. The law usually provides for any of those cases of extreme necessity, which require an interposition more prompt than its own. It permits the defender of his life, his person, and his property, to take the function of prevention, and even of punishment, into his own hands; while at the same time it forbids and punishes any violence that sets aside its own agency and its own processes when these can be employed. No man can successfully contend that it is a duty which he owes to himself, to usurp the functions of the magistrate, in ordinary cases. No logic except that of pride and passion, disguised as self-respect and self-assertion, can be used in its defence. Duelling and lynch-law rest on a common error, and are akin in a common fellowship of crime.

Doctrine of self-defence sometimes pressed to an extreme.

The second case supposed is that in which the government is unable or unwilling to protect or defend even one's natural rights. In such a case the individual is supposed to be left to himself; as it is said, in a state of nature. How far may such an one go in asserting and defending his right to life or liberty or property? Le-

Suppose the government fails in its duty.

gally he may proceed to use any extremity which is necessary. When a man is assailed by a murderer, if he is alone, and can neither summon to his aid any official or a fellow-man, he may take the life of the assailant of his own life, liberty, or property. *Legally* he may do this in any case of actual or even of threatened peril. This defence is complete and legally allowed in all tribunals which deserve any consideration, whenever it is proved that the perpetrator of the act was brought into a condition of danger or fear by any reasonable construction of the conduct of his assailant. It makes no difference whether it be the life, the liberty, or the property, which is assailed; provided, again, that delay in using extreme and summary measures would involve serious peril to either.

Whether a man in all such cases is *morally* justifiable in defending his life, liberty, or property, is altogether another question, and one which can be decided by no fixed and absolute rules. It will generally be conceded, that from a regard to others, if not to ourselves, it sometimes becomes the duty of a man to waive the assertion of his natural rights, and especially to hesitate to vindicate them by the extremest measures which the law may allow.

§ 199. Not a few contend, with a show of reason, that self-defence in any form is inconsistent with the rules and spirit of the Christian ethics; and that it is so far characteristic of the Christian to waive rather than to assert his rights, especially in cases when to assert or defend them would involve the extremest evil to the assailant. Self-sacrifice rather than self-defence, they contend, is the comprehensive rule and principle of Christian duty.

Self-defence not inconsistent with Christian ethics. Life, liberty, and property should always be sacrificed rather than defended. It is sufficient here to advert to the fact that the self-sacrifice which is characteristic of the Christian morality concerns the extent to which the fundamental and comprehensive duty of love should be applied, and the energy with which it should be asserted, rather than to

Non-resistance.

the form of external actions in which it should be manifested. The principles which should control the feelings and the will are indeed illustrated by special instances and extremes of outward action (§ 136) ; but the instances employed are not to be taken as positive rules for the direction of the conduct, except so far as circumstances justify and compel them. Even the apparently positive direction, “ I say unto you, that ye resist not evil,” as is obvious from its very breadth, cannot have been intended as a literal direction, and should not be so interpreted ; but only as expressing the supremacy of the principle of overcoming love above all opposing maxims or the contrary spirit. The courage and daring of the Christian defender of his own life, rights, or liberty, or those of his friends, are all the more energetic and chivalrous because he regards his life, liberty, and property in one sense as not his own, but his fellow-men’s and his Master’s, in whose keeping he may trust them, and in whose help he may confide. The Puritan, the Huguenot, the Cavalier, have all, in their several ways, manifested this quality of Christian ardor, and this tenacity of heroic self-respect, without abating in the least the tenderness of Christian charity or the genuineness of its forgiving spirit.

§ 200. The duty of self-respect is akin to the duty of asserting one’s personal rights. Self-respect is a special **The duty of self-respect.** habit or disposition which impels to the recognition and assertion of one’s claims as a man to respect by others. As an inward impulse, it disposes to a just estimate of one’s place among his fellows. In a secondary but most important sense, it denotes elevated tastes, aims, and purposes for one’s self. The special acts to which it prompts will vary with the circumstances and the disposition of the individual. Men vary very greatly in their sensitiveness to the treatment of their legitimate claims by others, and in the impulses to push and defend these rights. The circumstances which should determine questions of duty and propriety in outward action also vary very greatly at different times. A quick sense of the

rights that are due to others is by no means proportioned to a man's sensitiveness to his personal claims. That a man ought often to assert his rights, in matters both great and small, is obvious. That he ought more or less frequently to waive them, is equally clear. Quickness to assert and readiness to yield may, in varying circumstances, both proceed from a high tone of self-respect. A timid and yielding temper is often the result of uncontrolled emotional sensibility, and betokens moral weakness and personal cowardice. On the other hand, a bumptious and fighting disposition argues gross insensibility to the sympathy and good opinion of others, such as is often, if not usually, attended by a conscience which is defiant of duty and of God. But whatever a man may do, or refrain from doing, in the assertion of his personal claims, there can be no question that he ought to cherish and defend his inward self-respect as a condition of personal comfort and courage, and also as contributing to his moral strength. The man who fails in respect for himself often fails in respect for his manhood and his God.

§ 201. This inward habit is a legitimate result of faith in such a rational and moral order of the universe as provides equally for the well-being of all moral persons, and practically conceives of all as equally near and dear to God. Such a faith implies and enforces a living faith in personal rights, and justifies any and every man, who makes duty to be his law, in a constant faith in the dignity of man as man, and in the personal esteem and care in which he is held by the Supreme Moral Ruler. It is only by such a faith, that self-respect can rise above the narrowing conditions of poverty and social depression, can remain undisturbed by the indignities and insults which are inflicted by wealth and pride, or can find comfort in the absence of human sympathy. Moreover, it is only as self-respect is tempered and inspired by this ethical element, that it can be kept free from the overbearing assumption and haughty air which a sense of one's rights is apt to engender, and can school itself sensitively to respect the rights of others. "They who deny God destroy man's nobility" as it is viewed by the eye of God. On the other hand, those who school themselves habitually to think of their fellow-men as equal before God, and as alike objects of interest to his feelings, are not only justified, but compelled to respect their rights as sanctioned and enforced by his purposes and his will. It is by a recognition of these principles, that we solve the practical paradox which

**Founded
on what
assumption.**

seems to be furnished in the conjunction of the profoundest Christian humility with the most sensitive regard to personal rights and the most heroic courage in maintaining them. This paradox has often been exemplified in the heroic and desperate daring for the defence of these rights by those who have been the lowliest in their humility before God. They certainly sanction such a sensitive regard for these rights as only an assured confidence in God can make rational, but which atheism turns into a desperate scramble for selfish supremacy.

II.

CHAPTER VII.

DUTIES TO OUR FELLOW-MEN: THEIR COMPREHENSIVE
AND FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE.

§ 202. THE duties of man to his fellow-men are all included in, and enforced by, the general obligation benevolently to promote their highest good. Every man is morally bound to feel and act for the highest well-being of his fellow-men. In popular and familiar language, the one comprehensive law of man's duty to man is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*. This principle provides for and enforces all our duties to men. These duties are naturally divided into two distinct and comprehensive groups, — *duties which we owe to all men alike, and those which we owe to special individuals and classes of men*; in other words, the duties which we owe to man as man, and the duties which we owe to those who have special claims upon us as individuals and communities. The ground of these common and universal duties, as will be seen, is the common relationship which places mankind on a common footing, and awakens a common sympathy. The ground of our obligation to recognize these natural rights of man is the confessed necessity of these rights to man's welfare. The grounds of our more special and limited duties are limited and special relationships, — such as those of neighbors, friends, benefactors, citizens, etc., — each of which supposes and awakens a special affection or emotion.

Duties of
man to his
fellow,
founded
on what
principle.

Divided into
two classes.

The comprehensive and fundamental law of duties of every class has already been explained to require the voluntary desire and realization of the highest good possible to our nature and circumstances as men (§§ 52, 58). This supposes that we can know the several capacities of our being, and can find in their relation to one another the supreme end for which we exist, and in this end an ideal law for our voluntary desires and activities. In this end, we also find the will of God made manifest; and thus the law of conscience is enforced by God's personal authority.

Not inconsistent with securing our own highest good.

The general law of duty does not limit our thoughts or our actions to ourselves. Man is a social, as truly as he is an individual, being. As a social being, he *can attain the highest good, possible for himself, only as he benevolently desires and acts for the highest good of others.* Moreover, the supreme good of the individual, in a rational and well-ordered universe, can never conflict with that of the community. He who sacrifices his separate good to the general welfare finds the highest good for himself thereby. "He that loseth his life shall find it." A rational science of the universe of fact and phenomena requires that we assume that every force and law which holds good for a part should be consistent with those of every other part, and that both should conspire in the harmonious working of the whole. The same is true of the personal and moral universe in respect to its constitution, and the duties which follow. This does not imply, as has been explained, that each man should desire the good of others because the secondary effect of their good, whether near or remote, will be a private good to himself; but that the measure of the worth of any affection or impulse, as compared with another, is the subjective good which it gives in his own experience, and its results to others. The affection of self-sacrificing love, when it is called for, is the best affection to him who exercises it, and therefore takes precedence over the self-seeking or selfish affection, whenever there is a temptation to the exercise of the latter. It were a contradiction in terms, to say that we ought to love our neighbor best because in this

Includes the good of others.

way we love ourselves best. Such love would be no love at all, but selfishness. But it is no contradiction to say that we may and must estimate the nature of love to self, and love to our neighbor, by our experience of the good of each; or that we find in the fact, that it is more blessed to give than to receive, an evidence of the place which this voluntary love should take as a law of action and sacrifice. We do not love our fellow-man in fact, when we are moved to the immediate or remote bearings of his good upon our good as an effect. But, when we judge between love and selfishness, we cannot but know that the one is a higher and better affection than the other.

These principles being established, we proceed to show that *benevolence is fundamental to all the duties which man owes to his fellows, and therefore includes and enforces them all.*

§ 203. As preliminary, we will explain the import of the law. *Subjectively, the benevolence or love which it requires is not a sentiment, but a principle;* principle being used here, not as a directing rule, but as a force impelling to action. It is also *voluntary*, and as voluntary, not transient, but a permanent state or purpose of the will. Such a purpose must necessarily animate the casual emotions, and constitute a loving temper or disposition (§ 37). It must also form the inner habits, and refine and elevate the character and manners. It must impel to kind words and beneficent actions, thus manifesting and strengthening itself by external doings. Love, as thus defined, is manifestly a moral and not a natural excellence; not a peculiarity of constitution, but the product of will; not a trait of inheritance, but the work and possession of the individual; not an impulse of sentiment, but a force of intelligence; not fitful and uncertain, but permanent, uniform, and trustworthy.

Objectively, this voluntary love respects our fellow-men; all of them alike, and because they are our fellows. Such an act can only be exercised or performed as an internal, and not as

**Benevolence
required,
subjectively
and objec-
tively con-
ceived.**

an external, activity; for the reason, that only a few can be reached — though all may be included — by the love or the acts of any one man. We owe love, and can render love, to all; but we can only do good to a few, “*as we have opportunity.*”

As men, they are alike in one common endowment or capacity, — the capacity for sensitive good or evil. As such, they appeal to our capacity for sympathy with their happiness or misery. Animals are like them in this; and hence animals, as we shall see, have a natural and moral claim upon our benevolent love (§ 308). Men not only enjoy and suffer, but they enjoy and suffer in kind and quality similarly with ourselves; and hence we have a fellow-feeling with them so far as, by memory or imagination, we can more vividly represent their pleasures and their pains. Sometimes one touch of nature will make the whole world kin in a common sympathy towards all mankind. But men are more than sensitive beings: they are also rational and moral, as well as intelligent; and their community with us in these higher endowments is the ground for greater breadth and intensity of sympathy.

Sensibility to pleasure and pain is a common characteristic or attendant of all the experiences of our fellows.

These all suppose and appeal to a natural capacity for sympathy, or disinterested affection, which is universal to the human species. Though this is called an affection, we do not attribute to it moral quality. When we assert that it is disinterested, we do not mean that it is so in the moral acceptation of the term. We have to do only with the natural sensibility as it might be supposed to exist and act, were man destitute of the voluntary power and incapable of moral responsibility, and (as it often does exist) apart from any moral worth. The question with which we are concerned is, whether man, as such a being, is capable of being made happy or miserable by the joys and sorrows of his fellow-beings, irrespective of any relation, near or remote, to his own happiness or suffering.

Men alike
in a capacity
for good.

Also for dis-
interested
sympathy.

Two schools divide the opinions of men upon this question, — *the disinterested, and the selfish*: the first holding
Opposing to an original capacity in man for pleasure or pain
schools of from the joys or sorrows of his kind; the second,
opinion. that all these apparently disinterested feelings are the factitious products of some indirect connection, by association or causation, with our own real or imagined joys or sorrows.

Very recently, the terms *altruism* and *altruistic* have been used by a certain school of thinkers to designate the fact and doctrine of natural disinterestedness, so far as they can hold to the natural, as contrasted with the derived.

We hold that man is disinterested by nature, for the reason
Man dis- that he uniformly finds unalloyed pleasure in wit-
interested nessing the happiness of his fellow-men, provided
by nature. his selfish will is in no way crossed or disturbed; and this apart from all hope of selfish recompense, either direct or indirect. There is no evidence that the veriest monsters of cruelty ever take direct pleasure in inflicting or witnessing pain for its own sake. In every instance where they seem to do so, it is the love of power, or the desire of self-forgetting excitement, or some other simple or complicated feeling, which explains what seems and is so often interpreted as the mere wantonness of cruelty, or the fiendishness of hatred or rage.

The common likeness or relationship in our fellow-men as men, appealing as it does to a common sensibility in us to their well-being, imposes benevolence as a duty to all men alike, in so far as all men have a common nature. Hence the rule, "Thou shalt love thy fellow-man as man." As men they are also susceptible of different degrees and kinds of good. As merely sentient, they are akin to animals in so far as they are only sentient, and capable of animal sensations no higher and finer, and perhaps now and then lower, than those of certain animals. On this ground, their appeal for a response of love would seem to be feebler than that of the animal. But inasmuch as many, not to say most, of their sensibilities, are higher

than those which the noblest animals can feel, their appeal is immeasurably stronger.

As we compare the sensibilities which are human with one another, they differ greatly in natural value, both as direct experiences and in their immediate and remote results. Consequently they make a stronger or weaker claim upon our answering love. As we rise into the region of moral sensibilities with their nearer and remoter blessings, we find that these displace all the others, and command our benevolent will to esteem and prefer them to all other good. But in the command to love our neighbor as ourself we are required and supposed to *love ourselves as moral beings*; i. e., to control and regulate our love to ourselves by a just measure of the blessings which we desire for ourselves, according to a perfect moral standard. Following this rule, *we should also love our neighbor as a moral being*, and measure out the benefits which we desire for him according to their moral value.

The sensibilities differ in rank and value.

§ 204. It is easy to see, that, under this rule, the duties which we owe to individual men *will by no means be the same*. On the contrary, the simple, comprehensive, and constant duty of benevolence to all, will expand into a great variety of special duties, that may change with every instant. It is easy also to see, that, from the general rule to benevolently regard the highest good of all men, a great variety of special rules can be derived and enforced. The only possible question which can arise is whether this provides for and enforces the rules of all our special duties.

The rule of love involves a variety of duties.

No man can reflect in the most superficial way on the comprehensive law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," without discovering that it provides for a great variety of these duties, and contains the germs and suggestions of an entire system of practical morality. The man whom we are to love as ourselves is our neighbor; i. e., our nearest fellow-man, whosoever he happens to be; i. c., every man and any man, even if he only chances to be next to us for a moment in the encounters and shiftings of life. Be he black or white, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, country-

Who is our neighbor: variety of relations.

man or alien, virtuous or vicious, we are bound to love him, not because he has become our neighbor and we have become wonted to him or have learned to like him, but because he is our fellow-man, and therefore one to whom we owe sympathy and service.

We should ordinarily give preference to our neighbor over one who is more remote; and therefore the law does not read abstractly, **Why should we prefer our neighbor?** what it really implies, *Thou shalt love thy fellow-man*; but says in idiomatic speech, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor*. For this there are many reasons which give emphasis and explanation to the precept. First of all, "neighbor" means the man nearest to hand, and therefore the man on whom we can most conveniently confer a favor. He is also one with whose wants we are most fully acquainted, and therefore whom we can help most advantageously. He addresses our sympathies most directly, as a person to a person, and therefore makes a stronger appeal to our feelings; his sorrows and joys being present to our observation, and commanding our sympathy. It is a very different thing, to most men, to hear a cry of distress or to witness a scene of agony in the house nearest to themselves, from what it is to imagine either as it is reported across the ocean from a house and a person whom they have never seen, in India or Japan. The rule seems also to say, the man who does not love his neighbor does not love anybody. The man who loves men in general, but loves no man in particular, how much soever he may prate of his universal love, loves no one in fact. Moreover, men are moved to become neighbors very often because connected by family ties, by mutual likings, by gratitude; and this fact becomes an accessory explanation and confirmation of the precept. By these tests is exploded that pretentious and superfine cosmopolitan benevolence which loves humanity so intensely as to love no living man in particular.

While the rule commands us to love all men as men, and **The rule recognizes a difference in men.** because they are men, it impliedly provides for *our doing more and caring more for some men than for others*, and thus recognizes and inculcates the duties of gratitude, and those founded on kindred, friendship, and nationality. At the same time, it guards against the abuse of these special and limited claims, by reminding us of the general law which rises above these particular limitations. The parable of the Good Samaritan, uttered in response to the inquiry, "Who is my neighbor?" at once enlarged and limited the law in each of the directions adverted to.

§ 205. We are also commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, — that is, as really as we love ourselves, and yet under the same limitations under which we should love ourselves. This implies that we have **Love to our neighbor as to ourselves.** a capacity as real and natural for an interest in the welfare of others as in our own. But this by no means implies that our sensibility to their joys and sorrows is the same or a similar experience with our own. A personal experience and a sympathetic sharing, whether of joy or sorrow, are widely different: one's own joy or sorrow differs from one's fellow-feeling with the joy or sorrow of another. It is only by a figure, that we are said to make either our own. Nor, again, does it imply that we should do every thing in act for others which we would do for ourselves. This would often be impracticable, for the reason that we do not know as well what others need as what we need for ourselves. Then, again, true love would dictate that each man, so far as is possible, should supply his own wants, and sometimes find his comfort solely within himself. These and other limitations are provided in the comprehensive qualification that we ought to love our fellow-men as *moral beings*; i.e., we are to measure the benefits we impart, and the love we render, *by a moral standard*. The law commands us to set the highest value on moral attainments and progress for others as for ourselves; and to sacrifice to these, sensual and vicious enjoyment, and the perverted joys of selfishness and malice, as also the ease and sloth of indolence and dependence. We should also prefer future and permanent to immediate and transient good, and do this solicitously, systematically, and courageously.

§ 206. It cannot be questioned, we think, that the law of benevolence enforces and provides for many of the special duties of feeling and action which we owe to our fellow-men. The only question which can possibly be raised is, whether it comprehends all these duties. Upon this point moralists are divided: some holding **The law of love enforces many special duties.**

that the duties enforced by benevolence are co-ordinate with other classes of duties, e.g., those of gratitude and veracity; and others, that these and every conceivable class are enforced and comprehended by this general duty of benevolence. To avoid a mistake which is often made, we call attention to the difference between the position that benevolence comprehends and enforces all duties, of every description, and the position that benevolence as explained comprehends all the duties owed *by man to his fellow-man*. The last is the position which we maintain, leaving the first question for the present undecided.

Reasons for holding to this law.

Our reasons are the following:—

(1) Benevolence is a force which it is conceivable should exist. The agencies exist which might bring it into operation; the influences which tend to call it into action exist also. It is conceded that it might prevail everywhere, and be exerted with the utmost energy. The force is, in fact, exerted to a certain degree. It is in its nature a comprehensive or generic force, impelling to human welfare of every kind; it favors and impels to every conceivable human virtue. There is no single duty from man to man which it does not enforce, to a certain degree. Gratitude, veracity, justice, and natural affection are all promoted by it, and are, to a certain extent, the products of its presence and energy. From these considerations we infer the probability that this form of emotion is sufficiently comprehensive to include and enforce every conceivable duty which man owes to his fellow-man.

(2) The force would produce perfection of character and condition.

(2) Were all men perfectly benevolent, the condition and character of men, so far as these depend on their fellows, would be as perfect as they could possibly become. Their character would be perfect so far as any and every influence from without might tend to this perfection. Each man would love his fellow-man as a moral being, and would act and sacrifice to make him

perfectly good, and, so far as lay within himself, to make him perfectly happy.

The united influence of all upon each would conspire to this effect without jealousy or envy or any selfish or divided feeling. Every man would know that his fellow was his earnest and disinterested friend, and would find in the confidence and the interchange of sympathetic feeling a constant stimulus to activity for all. Nature would be explored as never before in the inmost of her capacities and the shyest of her secrets; because science would be stimulated by the perfect disinterestedness of every student, inspired and aided by the helpful thoughts of every other student, all eager to contribute of their best in united researches and to supplement the defects of each other. Invention, art, and skill would be stimulated and rewarded by the highest and purest incentives, and all the economies and resources of nature and society would be utilized to the utmost. Even with all the physical defects and limitations that are incidental to the present material and social condition of man, the triumph of this single moral force would make real a perfection of character and a blessedness of human condition which the most ardent enthusiasts have scarcely dared to dream of. Let the spring or principle of human action which we call a benevolent will be made real in and by every human being, and man and human society would be flooded with perfection and joy. This sober statement of the conditions which are required for an ideally perfect and happy human race goes far to prove that benevolence provides for all the duties of man to his fellow-men. Should it be said that happiness is not virtue, no one holds that it is; but the voluntary desire of the highest well-being of sentient and moral beings may still be virtue. It is sufficient to add that virtue and happiness surely are not, or ought not to be, incompatible, and that virtue as a spring overflowing with happiness would leave little to be desired or provided except for a metaphysical abstractionist or a transcendental doctrinaire.

(3) The principle is sanctioned by the direct authority of the Scriptures. Of the two great commandments recognized as fundamental and comprehensive by the greatest of teachers, one relates to our duties to God; and the other to our duties to man, viz., *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*. The prominence of these two would justify the inference that the second comprehends and enforces all the duties which man owes to his fellow. Paul seems to meet the question distinctly, and to decide it positively, when he says expressly, in a form more philosophical than he

(3) The duty is recognized in the Scriptures.

often uses, that all the special precepts of duty from man to man — as, “Thou shalt not kill,” “Thou shalt not steal,” etc. — are “briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” and he adds in the way of argument, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore *love is the fulfilling of the law.*” No declaration can be more explicit in its tenor, or more philosophical in its form, than this. The character of Christ is also given in the brief phrase, *He pleased not himself*; and, when all the perfections of God are gathered into a single word, that word is *love*. The fact that this generalization was not reached by the best of the ancient moralists, and yet was anticipated in the law of Moses and confirmed by the practical and speculative teachings of Christ, forms no argument against its speculative soundness.

No truth is better confirmed by the history of ethical thought, than that a practical standard of duty and aspiration among men has often been proposed for conduct and character before it has been possible to establish and justify it by speculative reasoning. Certainly the principle which is so confidently taught and illustrated in the Scriptures, that love is the fulfilment of the law of duty, has no less value or authority because it was first urged for practical ends, and required generations of martyrdom and self-sacrifice to give it authority and dignity in the schools of philosophy. That the Christian practice and the Christian theory were an advance upon what had been recognized and received before, can not and will not be denied by any candid student of history. The essential equality and worth of individual men, despite differences of station and even of nationality, were indeed abundantly emphasized by the Stoics. A gentle and reflecting nature, like Marcus Aurelius, could derive moving generalizations of sympathy and pathos from his meditations on the inequalities and disproportions of man's condition; but the recognition of unselfish love as a practical principle, which like a central and glowing fire should control the purposes within, and animate to every single act of duty, is a precept for human action which was slow to be recognized as a principle for Christian speculation even in the schools of Christian thinking. Its distinct recognition by the world at any time can be best explained by the exemplification, in the person of the Son of man, of that “enthusiasm of humanity” which, after it had been lived as a fact, came slowly to be recognized and taught as an ethical doctrine.

Confirmed by
the history of
ethical truth.

§ 207. To these arguments it will be objected: **Objections.**

(1) That the impulse or principle of benevolence neither provides for nor enforces certain classes of duties to our fellow-men, as those of *veracity and justice*, of *gratitude and natural affection*; or, if it provides for these in a general way, it fails to do so with the force and discrimination which are required for their practical efficiency. Those who urge this objection must assume that man is somehow endowed with certain independent and instinctive impulses to these virtues, which of themselves enforce and direct to every one of their appropriate duties whenever each is required; and this not only in general, but in every individual case when a single duty of the class is called for. They must also hold that these impulses adjust themselves to one another with unerring precision, as when, in a single instance, a duty of gratitude takes precedence of a duty of affection, or *vice versa*; while in other cases, as is inferred, one class of impulses should never give way to another, as some assert of the obligations to veracity and justice. They must also hold, in order to be consistent, that, although benevolence may enforce these duties, it does not give them their sole, much less their supreme and final, moral authority. The duty of benevolence, by those who hold this position, is regarded as being simply co-ordinate with the duties of gratitude and veracity and the rest, and not as superior or generic to all.¹ These objections can be answered only in detail.

(1) The law fails to enforce certain duties.

¹ It is worthy of notice, that, in his Dissertation (II.), Butler takes the position that "benevolence and the want of it, singly considered, are in no sort the whole of virtue and vice. For, if this were the case in the review of one's own character, or that of others, our moral understanding and moral sense would be indifferent to every thing but the degrees in which benevolence prevailed, and the degrees in which it was wanting." In his sermon on the "Love of our Neighbor," however, he says, "I proceed to consider, lastly, what is affirmed of the precept now explained, that it *comprehends in it all others*, i.e., that to love our neighbor as ourselves includes in it all virtues;" adding, in the way of answering objections, among other things, that "reason, considered merely as subservient

We select first the duty of *veracity*, and ask, What are its relations to the general duty of benevolence? It will not be denied, that the mutual understanding and mutual confidence, to which the strictest veracity is essential, are great blessings to man, to which benevolence would always impel; and, consequently, that, in many instances, benevolence requires veracity. The objector assumes that there are instances in which these good results would not follow, and that, in these cases, the duty would not be enforced by benevolence alone. He overlooks two things: first, that it is not easy to show, in many cases, that no evil would follow the infraction of the duty; or, if this were granted of a few, it does not follow that the duty which man owes to himself would not, in every such instance, enforce the strictest veracity; and thus, by the operation of both these impulses, the duty itself is provided for without a possible exception which would offend an enlightened conscience (§ 224).

That *justice* is enforced by benevolence, in many cases, will not be questioned. *Justice* is defined as the accordance, to each man, of his dues or rights. So long and so far as the accordance of these rights is a blessing to each and to all, so far and so long will benevolence bid us render these rights to every man, — rights of every sort, “tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, honor to whom honor.” So far, benevolence enforces and provides for justice. Should no conflict occur between the public welfare and the so-called private rights, benevolence, in impelling to the first, would always enforce the last. Should such a conflict arise; i.e., should a man be called on — as it is supposed he might be — to surrender to the general welfare a right which ordinarily it would be his duty to assert, — as

to benevolence, as assisting to produce the greatest good, will teach us to have particular regard to these (natural and special) relations and circumstances; because *it is plainly for the good of the world that they should be regarded.*”

of property, liberty, or life, — if I take from him that right, or suffer him to be deprived of it, I perform the act to which he ought himself willingly to consent. If it be asserted that it never can be for the general welfare to infringe upon a private right, even with the consent of the party concerned, then benevolence can never, in the extremest cases of necessity, impel to such an act as a duty on my part. Such an unqualified assertion is, however, refuted by the actual practice of mankind, as individuals and communities, under the pressure of necessity.

The love to our neighbor, which is commanded, is love to him as a moral being, who is supposed to acknowledge the obligations and limits of duty with respect to himself. Every blessing which I am commanded to wish or to will or to effect for him is therefore necessarily limited by his real welfare as controlled by the law of duty which he is presumed to accept.

True benevolence regards man as moral.

(2) It is urged still further, that the principle under consideration requires us often or occasionally to neglect or sacrifice the special affections, as of gratitude or kindred, and must consequently introduce a cold and calculating morality in place of one of warm and living impulses. To this it may be replied: This objection finds all its force in the untenable assumption that the welfare of man is not furthered in general by allowing the affections of kindred and friendship to inspire and control the inner and the outer life. It is to the outer life, it should be observed, that the application of our principle chiefly relates, — not wholly, indeed, but chiefly. It mostly concerns itself with our duties, specially so considered; i.e., with *how we are to act*, and not with *how we should feel*. It does indeed require us to control and regulate our feelings, even the most sacred and the tenderest, principally under the law of duty to ourselves, incidentally and partially from the law of duty to our fellows; but it is with what we are to do, not with how we should feel in respect to our kindred, our intimates, our friends, and our benefactors, that this ques-

(2) Requires the sacrifice of special affections.

tion is chiefly concerned. This being true, the question takes this form: Does the duty of benevolence permit and require the affections to inspire and regulate the special duties of man to man? and, if so, does it permit and require this, without limitation or exception?

In answer to this question, we would reply: It unquestionably does, but with now and then an exception. No man will question that men would be happier and better, were the natural or family affections stronger and more controlling than they are; were parental and filial and conjugal love more carefully and tenderly cherished, and more frequently yielded to. We also assume that the re-acting influence of these affections, and the expression of them upon the acts and habits, should be a larger determining force than they usually are in settling questions of duty. But, while a rational benevolence thus exalts the impulses of kindred and gratitude and friendship into controlling elements of character and conduct, it does not recognize any one or all of these affections as supreme in every conceivable case. Practically to assume this would be impossible, for the reason that the so-called natural impulses are themselves so conflicting and indeterminate as to be incapable of rigid formulation, or the adjustment of the relative moral force of each to every possible variety of circumstances. We cannot, if we would, yield to our feelings, or take our feelings as a guide. To attempt this theoretically, would give us what in the bad—yet a very intelligible—sense is a *sentimental morality*, i.e., a morality inspired and moulded by feeling alone; and feeling as such is confessedly variable, capricious, unreasoning, and unreasonable. In practice and in fact, the exercise of judgment in respect to the place and comparative force of feeling is constantly called for; and judgment supposes some relationships in the feelings with respect to one another, and to the common good as requiring rule and subordination. These relationships of the feelings can only be found in their effects so far as these can be foreseen in both ordinary

On the contrary, it inspires them.

and extraordinary circumstances. The general duty of benevolence, which is acknowledged to be binding, requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves. While it recognizes the value of the varied feelings which we naturally exercise towards different neighbors, it requires us to regulate them all, and to yield to them only so far, and in such a way, as they will promote the highest good of all.

§ 208. The objections which we have considered are not infrequently urged in a popular form as follows : —

These objections in a popular form.

(1) The principle in question would subject the decisions of every question of duty to the *calculation of consequences*. President Timothy Dwight (*Theology*, sermon xcix.) accepts benevolence as the comprehensive law of special duties to man, but rejects the corollary that it involves the calculation of consequences. According to this rule, he urges in objection, we are permitted to perform no action till we have forecasted its probable results, both near and remote, as compared with every other. To do this, even when these results are obvious, must involve us in constant perplexity and delay. When these consequences are remote and uncertain, the perplexity and delay must be overwhelming. The consequences of most of our actions, we are often unable to foresee. Even when we can foresee them, we cannot always estimate their relative importance. The rule proposed, he reasons, must therefore be either useless or impracticable.

(1) Involves the calculation of consequences.

To these objections we reply, that the rule by no means subjects every question of duty to an estimate of consequences. It does this only in cases that appear to be exceptional; i.e., in cases where deviations from the ordinary and obvious working of the general rule force themselves upon our notice. General rules of duty are suggested by the natural relationships and affections; and these are to be promptly and completely obeyed, unless some excep-

Reply.

tion is suggested. In every such case, the reason for the exception is shown to be also the reason for the rule. Ordinarily we do not recognize the reason for our actions: we obey the impulses of feeling, the guidance of domestic and social relationships, or those accepted maxims of duty which are founded on the collected experiences of life. Our faith in these indications and ordinances of nature, including in nature man as individual and social, justifies us in trusting and implicitly obeying these rules when no occasion is indicated for deviating from them. But whenever we clearly see that the consequences of obedience must be evil, and evil only, and that duty requires us to resist and overcome the natural affections and impulses, we are compelled to find an exception to what would otherwise be accepted as the ordinary rule of duty. The common sense and the common practice of all mankind justify such exceptions, even though their ethical theories fail to provide for or to enforce them.

(2) The kindred objection, that this doctrine makes morality shifting and uncertain, is met by the consideration, first, that, in the sphere of the intentions, the rules of morality never change; and, second, that in the domain of action, as contrasted with that of intention, ethical rules must necessarily be the products of induction rather than of intuition, and consequently must admit of more or fewer exceptions. This necessity is attended by many advantages; conspicuously by this, that the intellect is constantly sharpened, and the honesty of the motives is constantly tested, by the necessity of determining *what we ought to do*, as well as of deciding whether we are willing to do as we ought. The moral discipline may be as salutary which is involved in the decision by the intellect of a question of duty, as that which is required for compliance by the will with the verdict when it is rendered.

A sagacious observer of human character and conduct, during a long life, once observed as the result of his experience, that

the moral honesty and responsibility of men are quite as frequently and as strikingly tested by the use of their intellect in determining questions of duty as by their conduct.

(3) The same objection is urged in another phrase, that the principle involved is that known as *the greatest happiness of the greatest number*, which as a theory of action and feeling is narrow in its range, and low in its tendency. To this we reply, that the rule is confessedly a rule for the outward conduct, and for this only; that it is practical and not ideal, objective and not subjective. It supposes love as will and love as feeling to control and animate the disposition and inner man: it professes to be a rule for the outward actions, and only so far as these concern other men. For such actions, no better rule can possibly be conceived than the rule to contribute to the utmost of their well-being. We are shut up to the alternative between prudence and common-sense as our guide in directing our practical benevolence, and a romantic sentimentalism which must often assume the air of dogmatic positiveness. The experiences of life teach men, often at a painful cost, that benevolent impulses, uncontrolled by self-controlling prudence and wise discretion, are often disappointing to the subject, and cruel to the object on which they waste their love and misapply their beneficence. We cannot be too firmly convinced, nor too carefully remember, that, while benevolence in intention is invariably inspired by God, beneficence in act must always be directed and often restrained by man, in the exercise of a wise forecast concerning the tendencies and effects of what we say or do.

(3) It is the doctrine of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

§ 209. Two tendencies seem at present to be contending for the mastery in the theories and the practices of men with respect to public and private beneficence; viz., the tendency on the one hand to individual self-reliance and independence, and on the other towards excessive dependence on one's fellow-men for either individual aid or social co-operation. *The first* would prevent the individual from imparting sympathy or aid to his fellow, and also cut him off from gratitude in receiving either: *the*

Two opposite tendencies are now struggling for the mastery.

second would make him dependent, in every action and every interest, upon society for whatever he needs. The one ignores or disdains the necessity and the privilege of dependence on others for help and sympathy, and the correlate duty of according both to others : the other would absorb the individual in the community, and subject him to its control, by some species of socialistic or communistic arrangement. The one, when carried to an extreme, becomes hard, repulsive, unsocial, and inhuman : the other makes the individual weak, effeminate, and impotent. The two can be reconciled and satisfied by that conception of benevolence which in its inner spirit is thoroughly disinterested, yet regulates its outward acts by a regard to their useful consequences as estimated by the practical wisdom of common sense, and the instructed judgments of social science.

§ 210. The conclusions which we have reached
 Summary of doctrine of moral benevolence. may be briefly recapitulated in the following summary : —

The obligation to love our fellow-men as ourselves includes all who belong to the race, united, as they are, by many relations which are common to them all. This
 Supposes a common nature and sympathy. common relationship is expressed by the proposition that they possess a common nature. This common nature, in every one of its relationships, appeals to, and tends to awaken, a common sympathy or affection in every human being. The capacity for this natural sympathy is the ground of the obligation which impels and commands every man to accord to others his voluntary love. On these grounds we are required to love all men alike. Hence the general obligation or duty *to love man as man*.

But besides this common relationship and its answering affection, which impel and direct to the duties and affections of the inner man, our fellow-men are united
 Also special relationships. to us by various *special relationships*, each of which appeals to our benevolent love, and affords an opportunity and enforces the obligation for special forms of feeling and action. First of all, there are certain permanent and universal conditions of human welfare which our benevolent love requires us to recognize and respect, and accord to all mankind. Such are the *possession and security of separate property, the independent*

control of one's actions and person, and the continuance of life. These blessings are not only desired by every man, but can be enforced as moral claims. These claims are so imperative, and so readily responded to, as to justify their being called his natural rights (cf. § 216). These rights are universally recognized and responded to by every man who loves his neighbor. There is also a variety of special relationships which include a greater or smaller number of individuals, each of which appeals to a special and peculiar emotion which is either original and simple, or, if derived and complex, is certain to come into existence under the ordinary conditions of human life. For this reason, these relationships and affections are designated as natural and human. Each of these relationships and affections is the ground of special duties of feeling and action. Next, every man is connected with a few individuals of his race by the relationships of the family, which evoke the so-called natural affections, and enforce the several duties of parents and children, husband and wife, brother and sister, etc. With others, and usually with many more, we are connected by the ties of gratitude and resentment, of friendship and repugnance, with the duties which attend them. With others we are united by membership in an organized community, pre-eminently in the state, or other less important and more artificial organizations. To others we are bound by the temporary and occasional relations of dependence and trust in communicating information, imparting help, and responding to confidence, such as impose the obligations to veracity and integrity. In this way arise the various special duties between man and man, which are more or less obvious in their import, and more or less imperative in their claims and authority.

§ 211. The special as contrasted with the general duties which we owe to our fellow-men are determined by these special relations and affections. As has already been observed, some of these relations are permanent and natural, others are transient and artificial. Some are

Foundation
of special as
contrasted
with general
duties.

constant in their authority, and can never be overlooked or neglected: others are variable in their claims, at one time asserting supremacy, and at another yielding to superior demands. Some admit and enforce general rules, with few or no exceptions in favor of the rival claims of other relationships: others may be variously interpreted according to conflicting or conspiring demands. In every case of apparent conflict, the appeal is to the supreme law of love to man as man; and this, whether one claim is to yield to another, or whether both are to be set aside by the demands of a superior duty. That which is supreme above all is the duty of love, — to man as man, we ordinarily say; but, as we more carefully express it, the duty voluntarily to desire the highest good of all men.

This general obligation enforces the duties indicated by these special relationships, and by the affections which are correlated to them. No one of these relationships as such, nor the affections which belong to any, are of themselves final. The moral law does not say, nor would it satisfy us if it did say, that the parental or brotherly or neighborly relation is always to be supreme, or that certain affections or emotions should uniformly take precedence of all others. In ordinary cases, they may be accepted implicitly as supreme, and followed as trustworthy guides, because they are enforced by the general law of love. It is, however, only because they are thus enforced, that they are accepted as moral laws: that is, we accept these relationships and affections as laws of feeling and conduct, because they indicate the sanction of the supreme law.

The same law which enforces these relationships and affections by rules, adjusts their claims when they seem to conflict with one another. When the most sacred of relationships and the most hallowed affections would draw or drive us in different directions, we must appeal to a higher tribunal and a superior law. Such a law we can find only in the comprehensive law of love to man as man.

§ 212. It should never be forgotten, that, in forming and interpreting these special rules of duty, we not only may, but we must, assume that the universe of related and moral beings is constituted and maintained in the interests of rational and moral order, and that the general and special laws which control each and all must act in harmony. It is an axiom of speculative and physical science, that the general and special forces of the universe act in unison, and that the separate action of any one tends to the harmony of the whole, even when it seems to conflict with and counteract it. Any science of the true — i.e., the science of the laws and relations of nature and of spirit — would be impossible without this assumption. The same is true of ethical science, or the science of duty and the good. We not only may, but we must, assume that the impulses and affections which impel to action are fitted and intended for harmonious and concurrent activity with one another, and with the forces and laws which control and adjust the entire system. It is not surprising, and it should occasion no offence, that ethical science should require the same axioms in respect to the order and harmony of the universe, which physics, and, indeed, every other science, assumes and demands.

**General
assumption
in respect
to natural
harmony of
the two.**

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF RIGHTS.

§ 213. FOLLOWING the classification we have made, we treat, first, of the duties which man owes to his fellow-man as man. The grounds of these duties have already been stated to be: Our fellow-men have a nature like our own; this nature appeals to our responsive sympathies, and thus reveals the end and law of our voluntary activities. These relations and sympathies are also supposed to be universal to the human race. They connect each individual man with every one of his kind, and impel to benevolent feeling and beneficent action to all. We need not discuss the question, whether the intelligent apprehension of this common relationship is originally preceded by, or developed from, a special instinct, which, as in the case of many animals, draws man to his kind. Whether there is or is not such an instinct, it cannot be made the ground of a duty or moral claim until it is recognized by the intellect as imposing moral obligation. We can recognize acts or feelings as duties to our fellow-men, only so far as we intelligently discern the common relationship between ourselves and them, which appeals to our benevolent feelings as a condition of common good.

We may safely assume, that, so soon as man awakes to self-consciousness, he awakes to the fact that he is a member of a community of his fellows, and that society expresses and enforces its claims to some response of duty. So soon as any one says *I* to himself, by the self-conscious recognition of his own person-

Man finds himself, from the first, in society.

ality, he says *thou* to his neighbor, with as distinct a recognition of a similar personality in him. He cannot do either without recognizing the common nature which *I and thou.* belongs to both. In this sense, it is true that man is born in society; and, as soon as he awakes to an intelligent apprehension of the fact and its import, he discerns that he is a "political animal," existing in a social organism. This community is more or less definitely organized. The constituent elements of this social organism are individual men. Its connecting bonds are the universal relationships which are involved in their common nature. The parts and the whole are readily discerned to be mutually dependent and related. They exist and act by and for one another, in the intentions of nature, and by their actual co-operation. These relationships are apprehended first in their individual exemplification, and subsequently affirmed in propositions which are more or less generalized and abstract. It may not even be true that man has first a distinct apprehension of the *ego*, before he apprehends his *alter ego*. It is probable, that, inasmuch as the *thou* is suggested to the attention by sensible signs and physical acts, our fellow-men and our relations to our fellow-men are sooner recognized as motives to action than ourselves and our relations to ourselves. If this be so, it is eminently true, *unus homo nullus homo*. Whether it be true, or no, it cannot be denied that a man separated from his kind is inconceivable in conception and impossible in fact. Out of society he could neither be physically born, nor exist after he was born. Sympathetically, also, he is as truly related to his fellows by his capacity to receive and to give, — the one involving the other, — and by the resistless impulses and the acknowledged obligations to both. These relations, growing out of our common nature as social beings, make it possible that men should be dependent upon one another, and should aid one another as necessary conditions of the well-being of each and of all. So far as this is possible, the law of duty commands that these conditions of well-being shall be conceded

and secured by each and every man to all his fellow-men, in all conceivable circumstances. No man can morally love his fellow-man who does not in his heart accord to him every good which the first can possibly impart, and which the second can receive.

§ 214. Moreover, every such good which one man is morally bound to impart to his fellow-men can be morally claimed by the second of the first. The second can demand it of the first by an appeal to his consciousness, to the consenting consciences of all moral beings, and to the judgment and authority of God. It follows, that every duty owed by A to B becomes, by the very fact, the matter of a *moral claim* from B upon A. It being presumed that the unbiased consciences of men in general unite with B, his demand is also recognized as a universal or common moral claim. *Ethically considered, such moral claims are rights.*

These moral claims are more or less indeterminate in their character, and variable in their sacredness. There are a few, however, which are recognized as universal in their application and unconditioned in their enforcement. These are called the *natural rights* of men, inasmuch as the good in question is required by all men as the condition of their true well-being, and is capable of being always given, at least, by the will of each and all. This term derives its significance from the fact, that the good in question, as life or liberty, is required by the nature of man as an individual and a member of society, as a condition of the well-being of every individual. Its sacredness and authority are derived from the fact, that the man whose welfare it immediately concerns may claim it from his fellow by an appeal to his consenting conscience, and that to this appeal his fellow-men may be presumed invariably to respond.

The question has been much debated, whether the concept of duty is founded on the concept of right, or that of right is founded on the concept of duty. If our analysis of these concepts is correct, it adjusts this question as follows: The nature of man involves and requires certain conditions of his true well-being. These conditions are needful for the realization

**Moral claims,
how related
to duties.**

**Relation of
duties to
rights, and
vice versa.**

of the ends of his existence, or his well-being, — such as the security of life, liberty of person and property. Unless this assumption of what man is, and requires for his well-being, be made and conceded, the conception of a right has no meaning. Unless this assumption is true, the conception of a right is valid neither in logic nor in fact. But the *necessity* or supreme importance of the good does not complete the significance of the concept as a matter of right, nor does it furnish its most important element. In order to give it its complete significance, and to impart to it its special sacredness and authority, man's moral nature must be introduced, as demanding, on the part of the recipient, in the name of duty and conscience, that the condition required be given; and consenting, on the part of the giver, that it be not withheld. In other words, it is not till the relation of duty is introduced, that the conception of right attains its complete and its specially sacred meaning.

“Je n'ai l'idée du droit d'autrui que parce que je connais que j'ai moi-même des droits ; et je ne connais que j'ai des droits que parce que je connais auparavant que j'ai des devoirs. En effet je conçois primitivement l'obligation de développer mon activité selon une certaine loi, de tendre vers un certain but, qui est le bien, ou la perfection.

“Cette obligation étant absolue, je conçois en même temps que je dois disposer de tous les moyens sans lesquels il me serait impossible de me développer conformément à la loi. Ces conditions sont essentiellement celles qui constituent ma personnalité, à savoir ma raison et ma liberté ; c'est là mon *droit* ; et ce droit, je le conçois comme une conséquence nécessaire de mon devoir.

“Ce que j'appelle mon droit, c'est donc en définition la possibilité d'accomplir mon devoir, et de même la possibilité pour mon semblable d'accomplir son devoir, j'appelle son droit.” — L. CARRAU, *La Philosophie Utilitaire*, 2me partie, livre 1, chap. x.

Briefly expressed, the relation of the conception of duty to right might be thus stated: Formally conceived, the right depends on duty, inasmuch as separate from moral relations it would have no authority; materially viewed, duty supposes certain fixed conditions of human well-being, founded in the nature of man, which are therefore his natural rights.

Moreover, every right supposes two parties, — the person in whom the right inheres, or who may assert and defend it for himself; and the person from whom the first demands concession or security. The person in either case may be one or many, single or organized; as when an individual may demand

security of life or property from a single man, or from the entire community, — as he may appeal to the assailant who would rob or murder him, or appeal from him to a crowd of bystanders, or to the community organized as the state.

§ 215. Ethically considered, a right is synonymous with a moral claim: the two are interchangeable. In the court of conscience, the two are equally valid and equally sacred. Not so in the ordinary usage of life, or in the technical signification of the terms. Technically conceived, however, rights, both in ethics and jurisprudence, are limited to external acts, the acts by which benevolent feeling is generally expressed and interpreted. We sometimes say, indeed, that a man has a right to affections, as to the gratitude, love, and confidence of his friend or child or wife; but it is only in the sense of a moral claim.

The term is thus limited, for the reason that the claim in question cannot be defined except by those acts which are supposed to be its appropriate effects or manifestations, nor can it be enforced except by penalties which are proportioned to the external effects of loss or injury. Not only must the claim respect an external action, but the action must concern a good or a means of good which is universally acknowledged to be essential to human welfare. So soon as it is thus acknowledged, it is presumed to be adapted and intended for all mankind in the economy and operations of nature. If the divine will or authority can be inferred from such a natural adaptation, the divine will can be inferred as upholding a claim to such a blessing as this. Prominent among these goods are *life, property, and personal liberty* in enjoyment and security. These are invariably acknowledged to be the elements and conditions of man's well-being under all ordinary circumstances. For this reason, every man claims each one of these blessings from his fellow-men, by an appeal to their consciences; and to this claim every man responds by the assent of his individual conscience.

§ 216. The extent and authority of these rights is emphasized by the adjectives *natural*, *universal*, and *inalienable*. They are called *natural*, because they are founded in the natural capacities and requirements of all human beings, and are entirely independent of any artificial or changing capacities or circumstances. They spring directly from the constitution of man as man; from his entire nature, be it observed, as personal, social, sympathetic, and moral. They are called such in contrast with those which are artificial, limited, temporary, and adventitious; such as are constituted by statutes which may be repealed, by fashions which may change, by institutions which may be abandoned, by relationships which may be dissolved, and yet which, while they exist, may enforce sacred obligations of duty. *The nature from which they spring, and on which they are founded, is human nature.*

Rights natural, universal, and inalienable. Natural.

It follows, that they can be affirmed of man only in his normal condition or development, and under circumstances which are essential to his physical and psychical activity. Idiocy, insanity, and imbecility greatly modify our practical appreciation of the fundamental principles of duty and right, if they do not the statement of our theories. Every safe and trustworthy theory supposes that these rights inhere only in men who are normally constituted and developed. Any deviation from this condition must be provided for by a serious exception to any theory, or by principles which are too broad and general to be of any practical use. If, for example, our fellow-men are in condition and development but little superior to animals, — if they are practically animals, and only potentially men, — my judgment in respect to their rights, so far as they appeal to myself and my duties towards them, must recognize them as combining the animal and the man in one individuality, and as being exceptional in their condition and claims.

These rights are also *universal*. Being derived from the nature of man, they extend as widely as universal manhood. They are limited to no race, color, or citizenship, but are co-extensive with the human family. Being founded on an assumed similarity or community of endowments, and sanctioned and consecrated by that conscience

Universal.

which makes the whole world kin, they include as receivers and givers all those to whom the capacity of being blessed and the obligation to impart a blessing can reach. By this is not intended that every member of the human race, under all conceivable circumstances, is entitled to the actual security or enjoyment of these so-called universal rights. Some men may forfeit their claims by crime; others may be debarred the actual enjoyment of the blessings in their gift, under the pressure of circumstances that refuse them a developed and normal manhood. It is intended, however, that, so far as a common manhood is concerned, it avails for all alike, whether these rights are claimed or waived; and that the claim is always responded to at the court of conscience and of unperverted public opinion.

These rights are also *inalienable*. They are incapable of being rightfully parted with by their possessor, or
Inalienable. being taken away from him by any act of personal violence or arbitrary decree. By this is not intended that a man may not expose himself to certain death to save the life of his friend or to defend his country, or voluntarily subject himself to the external conditions of personal slavery for benevolent or moral ends, or from similar motives abandon all private ownership of property, so far as this is possible. It is intended, however, that no act of an individual man or of society can deprive a single individual of any of these descriptions of rights, except for reasons or by processes which apply to all men alike.

This inalienability applies to both parties, the holder and the supposed invader of the rights. More frequently it supposes a violent invasion or interference on the part of an organized government or interest. In such a case, the term signifies that the right is such that it cannot be rightfully taken from any man, except for crime, and by due process of law, or in extreme necessity and for a limited period, as in certain cases for the necessities of government, as military service, etc. If

it concerns the duty of the person in whom the right inheres, it asserts that no man can lawfully divest himself of the moral authority to re-assert and resume the right. For example, let it be granted that a man might lawfully sacrifice or barter his life for the good of others, or take a vow of complete and perpetual poverty, or dispossess himself of his personal liberty, as certain missionaries are said to have allowed themselves to be sold as slaves in order to preach the gospel more effectively. Every such act is itself so far immoral, or un-moral, that it can permanently bind no man's conscience. No man can rightfully permanently part with the conditions of good which are so obviously essential to his well-being as a man. The acts or methods by which he may re-assert the rights of which he never could divest himself, and the new obligations which he may have contracted by his mistaken procedure, may involve some troublesome questions of casuistry; but these difficulties can never justify any human being in abandoning the essential conditions of his ethical manhood.

§ 217. It is most important, also, to remember, that, while an inalienable right can never be rightfully abandoned or alienated by its possessor, the assertion of it by external acts is left to his judgment, and must depend on varying circumstances. It is a serious error to hold, that, because the claim to such a good can never be rightfully abandoned as a moral claim, the assertion of it by external acts can never be waived, or controlled by varying circumstances. The argument, that, because all civil authority derives its moral sanction from its subserviency to human rights, therefore, when it fails to defend or promote these rights for an individual or a class, the individual or class is absolved from all obligations to its authority, is at once superficial and dangerous in the extreme. This question, however, concerns the conflict of duties, and is discussed under the claims and obligations created by civil government.

The doctrine of the inalienability of personal rights, when applied to domestic slavery as it once existed in the United States, was not infrequently interpreted as authorizing the slave to assert by violence his right to immediate freedom, and, consequently, as justifying him in resisting the civil authority in executing the laws which made and held him a slave. The argument was briefly thus: The master and the State found their claims

**Such rights
may not
always be
asserted.**

**Overstate-
ment of the
doctrine of
inalienable
rights.**

upon the duty of the slave to consent to the alienation of his right to personal freedom. But this consent the slave can never rightfully give; moreover, he is morally bound to refuse it: and for these reasons, it was argued, he may kill his master or the officers of the law, if either should attempt to restrain him or detain him in slavery. The fallacy of the argument consists in confounding two very different conceptions. The inward or voluntary consent to the loss of liberty is one thing; the external act which may be rightfully employed to regain and secure this right is quite another. The same doctrine was interpreted, by a similar fallacy, as involving the obligation on the part of the master and the community to restore to every slave, by an immediate and public act of emancipation, the complete enjoyment of those personal rights which had been unrightfully withheld.

§ 218. Rights are often still more specifically distinguished in that they are capable of clear definition and effective enforcement by the agencies of law and government. Not infrequently, rights have been subdivided into perfect and imperfect; the perfect, by this criterion, being those which are capable of being defined and tested and enforced by judicial tribunals, and the imperfect being incapable of such enforcement. And yet statutes and tribunals in theory, either formally or impliedly, recognize the principle that the intention is an essential ethical element of the actions with which they concern themselves. They release from conviction and penalty certain acts which are harmful and injurious, when criminality of intention can be disproved. They do not even attempt, indeed, to protect all human interests. They limit themselves to a very small number of duties and rights,—prominently those which relate to life, liberty, and property. Even with these limited interests, they concern themselves only in a negative way, by securing men against interference on the part of others in certain obvious particulars. For this reason, writers of a certain school contend that this negative function is the only function of civil government; that it does not concern itself in the least with the quality or character or the happiness of its citizens, but only defends their liberty, property, and life. This view we

**Rights as
capable of
enforcement.**

regard as narrow and untenable (§ 277). But while we cannot limit the functions of government and of law entirely to the protection of these rights, and that only in a negative way, we do not deny that its most conspicuous and important functions lie within this sphere. While, from the necessities of the case, civil government chiefly concerns itself with the material interests and the external conduct of men, and chiefly in the negative forms of prohibition and security, it by no means follows that it does not recognize their moral interests as supreme. It is, moreover, an unquestioned fact in criminal procedure, — a fact constantly recognized in the administration of justice, — that it takes jurisdiction of the intentions of men as interpreted through their actions. Moreover, it invests the rights which it would secure and defend, with the sanctions of the conscience, and uniformly appeals to the moral convictions and emotions as its supreme reliance in times of pressure and strain.

For these reasons we can neither limit rights in general, nor inalienable rights in special, to those only which civil government attempts to enforce.

CHAPTER IX.

DIFFERENT CLASSES OF RIGHTS, AND THE DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THEM.

So much for natural rights in general. We proceed next to consider them in detail, and the duties to our fellow-men which respect them.

Among the natural rights, we consider first *the right to life*, and the accompanying duty to respect the life of our fellow-men. Life, or the continuance of human existence in its present form, is assumed to be the greatest of earthly blessings. Every man clings to life, even when almost every thing which makes life desirable is taken away. So far as each man can judge for himself, life seems to him the greatest good which he can claim or receive from his fellow-men.

This desire of life, and the consequent request or demand from others, appeal directly and strongly to the responsive sympathy of all men. Moreover, the attendants of life, as health and comfort and hope, give pleasure to all, and quicken that generous and disinterested sympathy with his fellow-men which is presumed to be dormant or active in every human being. The accessories of the extinction of life, as pain, helplessness, and fear, plead for help and pity to all whose life we may defend or prolong by our interference or aid.

The impulse to defend one's life when it is assailed, and to contend for its continuance against the forces of matter and the assaults of animals and men, is another indication that nature intends that life should be protected

(1) Duties
respecting
the right
to life.

Defence
of life.

and cared for by each individual for himself, and should be aided by the sympathy and help of his fellow-men. Nothing save a selfish regard to private interests, or a selfish indulgence of antagonizing passion, could ever impel a man to take the life of his fellow. For these reasons, we cannot hesitate to accept the conclusion that every man is bound to respect the moral claim or right of his fellow to his life, as equally sacred and inviolable with his own claim to his own.

§ 219. The second universal condition of human well-being is the unlimited control of one's own actions, which is the foundation of *the right of personal liberty*. It is essential to the highest well-being of every man, that he should give expression and effect to his purposes and feelings; and, therefore, he may rightfully assert for himself entire freedom in word and deed, so far as he does not interfere with the rights or interests of others. For this reason, personal liberty becomes a universal right. By liberty, is not intended freedom from the restraints of conscience, or the moral law in any of its applications, but freedom from personal constraint on the part of others. In freedom from such constraint, we do not include freedom from any influence which a regard to the opinions or the sympathy of others may exert; but freedom from any force which hinders or forbids the expression or execution, by word or act, of the purposes or feelings. This, again, does not imply that the rewards and penalties of formal law should not be used to deter from those overt actions which the law forbids; but, rather, that the opportunity to disobey should be given to every man who chooses to avail himself of it, in full view of the penalties which will follow.

The importance of this freedom to the happiness and development, to the moral responsibility and growth, of every man, is attested by the consciousness of every man who is competent to ask and answer the question whether he esteems it to be a blessing. This desire and demand for it are responded to by the sympathy and the conscience of every one who is not biased

by some secondary consideration of interest or feeling, or some theoretical or traditional prejudice. Hence the sacredness of this right, and the earnestness and desperation with which men will fight and die for it.

Benevolence requires that this right should be conceded and secured to all men except to idiots, or imbeciles, or the insane, all of whom are temporarily or permanently destitute of the capacities or deprived of the conditions of independent manhood; excepting also offenders or derelicts who are punished by due process of law. In respect to all these persons, benevolence commands that they should be held in personal restraint for their own good and the good of their fellow-men. This right does not hold of minors or infants, who are supposed to require a gradual training to that capacity to use their completed freedom, which the theory of universal liberty contemplates as the destined end for all. It may not morally require or justify the sudden emancipation of an enslaved class, unless it can be assured or proved that liberty will bring a blessing to them and the community; but it does require that the ultimate emancipation of every human being should be contemplated as possible and obligatory, and that immediate measures should be taken for its final accomplishment. This position is a natural and necessary corollary from the general axiom concerning the moral order of the universe, which underlies all ethical principles and inferences.

It has sometimes — indeed, it has not infrequently — been urged, that the obligation to accord to all men this right of personal liberty leaves no room for discretion on the part of the individual or the community; that to concede any limitations upon the exercise of this duty, is inconsistent with its being a duty at all. It is sufficient to reply to this positive and plausible position, that the benevolent will or purpose is one thing, and the external act to which it impels is another; that, consequently, the realization of our purposes, in respect even to the natural rights of men, is a matter in regard to which no precise

To whom
should
liberty be
secured?

or mandatory rules can be prescribed or admitted. The only moral authority which binds or holds us to any duty is the rule of benevolent will. The authority to concede or secure a natural right to our fellow-man is derived from the knowledge or belief that it will result in good to him, or to others through him. How far this belief can extend, and to what duties it should impel, has just been explained. So far, and so far only, can we be bound to secure or concede any natural right. This distinction will suffice to sustain our faith in the natural right of every man to his personal freedom, and to regulate our actions in conceding to him this right.

§ 220. *The right to property* has already been briefly considered under the duties which man owes to himself **Right to property.** (§ 194). We return to it here as enforcing the duty to respect the right to property which inheres in other men. It has already been assumed, that the possession of property is one of the constant and essential conditions of human well-being, so constant and essential as to be a **Desire of property natural.** universal ground for perpetual obligations from man to himself. This obligation is, if possible, still more obvious when we consider the duties of man with respect to the well-being of his fellow-men. Few will question this truth who look at the constitution of man, and the facts of human existence, as they are. The first and most engrossing desires and acts of infancy impel to the appropriation of nourishment **Impulses to gain it.** and warmth and bodily comfort. As rapidly as the mind is awakened to the apprehension of the value of permanence in the attainment and security of any conditions of good, exactly in that proportion does it tend to acquisition. Moreover, the lowest and most uncertain civilization cannot exist without the control of a scanty *peculium* in the clothes which men wear, the huts in which they lodge, the temporary enclosures of soil which they plant for a single harvest, or the implements of hunting and fishing which they use. The most liberal acts of princely benevolence require property as the

medium of adequately manifesting the feeling of God-like love. Every communistic association carefully appropriates, and zealously defends against outside intruders, the limits of its common fund, and diligently labors for its increase, for the enjoyment and use of its limited partnership. These and manifold other objective indications prove that the arrangements of nature for man suppose property with its claims to be one of the permanent and universal conditions of individual and social welfare.

Men feel a special interest in whatever they can completely control, and find, in the desire to appropriate and to use, the most efficient stimulus to effort and painstaking. These special and strong subjective affections, when set over against the objective indications already referred to, justify or rather enforce the conclusion that man may assert a moral claim to something as his own, and that this moral claim will be universally responded to by the moral convictions of his fellow-men. Property, being classed with life and liberty as one of the essential and universal conditions of human welfare, is the subject of one of those moral claims which men call rights by eminence, i.e., one of the *inalienable and natural rights*. This right is enforced by the same authority, and subjected to the same limitations, which pertain to the right to liberty and life. To these claims, the law of love requires a universal and ready recognition on the part of all men. This right inheres in every human being, and should be recognized and respected by all with respect to all their fellows. Nothing but extraordinary individual and social conditions can excuse or justify its being denied or withheld by one man with respect to the other.

§ 221. What constitutes and defines property, must to a large extent be determined by custom and law. The general consent of the community, whether this is expressed by the usages and traditions in which all men acquiesce, or whether it is carefully defined by statutes, must be accepted as determining what is a *peculium*

Special
interest in
property.

Property
largely de-
fined by law
and custom.

or private possession, and to whom it belongs. Every man, as he awakes to moral consciousness, finds himself surrounded by the owners of property as thus determined. He also finds himself enjoying its blessings, and confronted with the motives to recognize its value and moral authority. Hence he gradually but easily understands the reasonableness of, and responds to, the obligation to respect the property of his fellow-men, as a special precept under the general law of love. As has been already said, the nature and extent of property must, to a large extent, be determined by established custom and positive law. The terms by which it is held, the evidences on which it is established, the methods by which it is conveyed, the processes by which it is asserted, differ in different communities.

Some, and perhaps all, of these arrangements, are fairly subjects of investigation as to whether they are founded in the nature, or are permanently adapted to the well-being, of man. Questions of this kind are all legitimate topics of speculation in political and social science, and some of them have a most important influence upon human well-being. For this reason, the discussion and adjustment of them are important duties, and hold an important place in practical ethics. But to contend against the existing tenures and laws of property as immoral, because they may involve exposure to moral evil, and to infer that therefore they are not binding on the conscience, may be criminal in various degrees of guilt, but is always an open offence against the state, and therefore against one's kind. The moral crime of demagoguism of this sort is equally serious, whether it be committed in the political harangue, the declamatory pulpit, the journalist's editorial, or the professor's chair. Property may be gained and held in the spirit of robbery; but property in itself is not robbery, but an arrangement to which man has a natural right which is sanctioned by the nature of man and the will of God.

§ 222 The three classes of rights which we have considered, pertain to blessings or benefits, in which the claimant is supposed to have a personal

interest, and to which he asserts his claim as being essential conditions of his personal welfare. Being founded in the permanent conditions of human nature, and being common to men as men, they are called *natural rights*.

There are other rights which are called *adventitious*, as being dependent on accidental conditions of natural relationship, or official or social position; as the rights of a parent, a ruler, an aged person, or a friend, benefactor, etc., whether they can be more or less definitely stated. Most of these claims are claims over or upon persons, and over the actions — or it may be the feelings — of certain of our fellow-men holding certain relations to their fellows, as contrasted with those benefits which are acknowledged to be necessary to the claimant by reason of his manhood. Thus the rights of a parent or a ruler concern the actions of children or subjects toward himself, and are grounded in their interests.

It is worthy of notice, that rights of this last class were formerly supposed to be the only rights which are natural and divine, and for this reason were held to be supreme. The rights of parents, of masters, and of kings were originally held to be unlimited, and not only to be natural and divine, but to be the only rights of this description, taking precedence of every other, even those now acknowledged as natural rights; the property, the liberty, and life of the citizen, the child, and the slave, being held to be subject by natural and divine authority to the will of the master, the father, and the king.

A better ethical and social philosophy has reversed this doctrine, teaching that rights over persons are held as trusts for the purpose of promoting the moral welfare of those over whom they extend. So soon as this end is fulfilled or achieved, the right lapses, and ceases to have any moral authority except so far as the well-being of the community requires the general authority of the official to be maintained. This change has wrought a revolution in many of the reasonings in ethical and political philosophy, to say nothing of theology.

§ 223. The consideration of the rights of men enables us to define the conception and enforce the claims of justice as a moral duty. The one is the correlate of the other; the one is defined by means of the other.

Nature of
justice as
a duty and
virtue.

In general, justice as a quality of intention, act, or character, may be defined to be such a benevolent recognition of the rights and claims of others as impels to beneficent action in according and defending them. It follows, that justice may be used in as many specific senses as the word "rights" admits.

The familiar definition of justice given by Justinian will at once occur to the thoughtful student: *Justitia est constans et perpetua voluntas jus suum cuique tribu-* Justinian's definition.
endi. In this definition we find happily recognized the most obvious and essential features of every moral state or action, subjectively regarded; viz., voluntariness, permanence, and supremacy. We find also the objective criterion of every just act, *suum cuique*; i.e., that which is one's own, or can be morally claimed by any one in the largest sense of "to claim."

That these claims or rights may admit of different significations, and need to be defined in different circumstances as a condition of the practical application of the rule of justice, is still further provided in the additional sentence: *Jurisprudentia est divinarum atque humanarum rerum scientia, justi atque injusti cognitio*. This implies, that in order that the *sua*—i.e., the claims or the rights of men—may be fixed and defined, there must be an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of human and divine things; i.e., of the original relations in the nature of things, or purposes of reason and of God, on which these claims and rights are founded. This knowledge is designated as jurisprudence.

If the term "rights" is used as co-extensive with moral claims of every sort, then justice is the voluntary purpose and act of conceding and fulfilling all claims of duty whatever, and is equivalent to the benevolent will and the benevolent act in general, as comprehending every virtuous act and intention which terminates in or affects our fellow-men. If rights are used to signify what are generally known as the natural or universal rights of men, then justice is interchangeable with the benevolent recognition of these natural rights, and the duties which these involve. Insensibility to these fundamental claims is regarded as gross and inexcusable injustice, for the reason that their reasonableness and authority are obvious to every honest mind. If rights, again, are synonymous with those claims which are

Various significations of justice.

defined and enforced by positive statutes and legal decisions, — such as claims to property, or claims by contract, — the disposition and willingness to abide by the law as interpreted

and enforced is *civil justice*, or that justice which is

Civil justice. enforced by a regard to the moral obligation to sustain civil order, and the authority of legal tribunals. If, again, rights are used in the sense of merely legal claims, — i.e., such rights as the statute may sanction by its technical requirements, or the tribunals may enforce with the evidence and decisions before them, — this would be called *legal justice*.

Legal justice. Legal justice, again, or the justice which is concerned with the rights which are recognized and enforced by law, may be limited to those legal rights which concern the exchange of values : in this case it receives the designation of *commuta-*

Commuta- *tive justice*, or justice in exchange. Or it may con-
tive, remun- cern the estimation of damages, and may be called
nerative, and *remunerative justice*. Should it concern the allot-
punitive ment of penalty for crime or neglect, it may then be
justice. called *punitive justice*. Legal or formal justice may be con-

ceded as failing, through human imperfection, to coincide with those moral claims which the knowledge of motives and other facts and relations would sanction. Such an ideal

Equity. justice is designated as equity, or the will and disposition to respond to those moral claims which are higher than those of technical or formal or legal justice. In such cases, that action or decision is emphasized as just, which renders to another all that equity assigns to him *in foro conscientiae*, as contrasted with the allotments of formal justice. Legal or formal justice, so far as it goes, is in theory coincident with the word “justice” in its highest import ; but as the former concerns itself only with the civil rights of individuals,

and of society in the aggregate, it stops short of the larger range over which moral justice extends.

Place of justice among the cardinal virtues. In view of these varied significations and uses of the term, it is not difficult to explain the fact that justice has

been assigned to the place of honor among the virtues; that with some modern critics, especially those of the purely rational or intellectual school, like Price and Kant, it has been deemed the fundamental moral idea, the ethical relation by eminence.¹ Among the ancients, as by Plato, three virtues having been assigned to the three faculties of the soul, — as follows: to the faculty of reason, the virtue of wisdom; to the heart, or the emotive nature, the virtue of courage, or manly spirit; to the senses, temperance, — justice was enthroned as a queen over the three, its office being to distribute to each its place and its functions, and hence was not infrequently invested with an ideal supremacy. The generic idea of justice in such applications is a voluntary conformity to the nature or relations of things in any complex individual or social organism. Nearly allied to justice as thus conceived, was the conception which Wollaston formed of truth as the fundamental and all-comprehensive moral idea.

By the moderns, general justice has been conceived, as we have already seen, as moral equity or rectitude in the actions and feelings of men, or of the Supreme Being, with respect to the character and deserts of any and all; also with respect to their claims, whether their claims to good as a reward, or their deserts of evil as punishment.

¹ See Note 2, to The Spital Sermon, by Dr. Samuel Parr (London, 1801), for an interesting collection of passages expressing this view, from Aristotle down to Jonathan Edwards, who formulates the doctrine held more or less distinctly by all, in these words: "Indeed, most of the duties incumbent on us, if well considered, will be found to partake of the nature of justice. There is some natural agreement of one thing to another, some adaptedness of the agent to the object, some answerableness of the act to the occasion, some equality and proportion in things of a similar relation, and of direct relation of one to another. So is it in relative duties, duties of parents to children, etc." For an exaggerated conception of this truth, see *Political Justice*, by WILLIAM GODWIN, 1793.

CHAPTER X.

DUTIES OF TRUTH, OR VERACITY.

§ 224. PROMINENT among the special duties which man owes to all his fellows, is the duty of veracity. The duty of veracity. may be formulated thus : *Whenever a man professes to impart any knowledge of fact or intention to his fellow-men, such communication should be truthful; i.e., should correspond to the truth of things.* Upon the observance of veracity, society depends almost for its existence, and manifestly for its well-being. If the rights of men are the foundation of the social structure, veracity is the cement which holds this structure together. Even Hobbes recognizes the truth, in the concession that, though society rests upon a contract extorted by fear, yet this contract supposes and implies veracity in the parties. The rule is of universal extent and obligation. It extends to all men, with no limitations of race, nation, or social rank, or of any special personal relationship or feeling; requiring absolutely that the truth should be told by all men to all, whenever their circumstances require that any communication should be made. The rule, it should be observed, does not assert that every man is morally bound to make a communication to his fellow in every instance in which it is greatly desired, or would be a great blessing to the man who desires and seeks it. It would be preposterous to assert, that, under the law of benevolence, men are bound to answer all the questions which other men are prompted by curiosity or their necessities

to ask. But it is altogether reasonable to assert, that, when they propose or profess to answer such questions, they should answer them truly.

The obligation to communicate information, though this is often a real obligation, and an obligation which is often wrongfully disregarded, is by no means so extensive as the duty to communicate it correctly. It may be my duty to withhold information such as is greatly desired and very much needed by the individual who asks it; and yet it may be equally binding never to deviate from the truth whenever I profess to impart such knowledge. Each of these duties is equally clear and imperative, but each class of duties is not equally extensive. Both may rest on the general duty of benevolence, but each is enforced by separate and special reasons of good to those who are concerned. It may be desirable and necessary that B, the expectant, should receive the information which A is competent to give him, and it may be true that A is morally bound to impart this knowledge to B; but this obligation is not an obligation to veracity. But if A professes to impart to B such information, or any information, then the duty of veracity comes in: in every such case, A is morally bound to impart the truth.

The obligation to communicate, and to communicate correctly.

The rule extends to every method of communication, to acts or looks or gestures as truly as to written or spoken words; and it imparts to each and to all an obligation which is equally real and imperative. A man may deceive or lie as malignantly and as effectively by a gesture or a look as by a word or an oath.

§ 225. The duty of veracity is included under, and enforced by, the general obligation to promote the highest good of our fellow-men; i.e., to do good to all men as we have opportunity. That the duty is enforced by this general rule, is obvious; the only point in question, and in respect to which moralists differ, being whether this is the only ground of this obligation. Mutual confidence and mutual understanding are well-nigh essential to the existence of society.

Veracity enforced by the law of love.

They are absolutely indispensable to any community that would realize the highest end for which society exists. The instant a man recognizes another as his fellow-man, he recognizes him as one whose thoughts and purposes he must understand in order that he may conform to them his own actions and plans. The first condition for establishing mutual intercourse with him, or existing in society at all, is that he should be able to rely on the unconscious and natural expressions of the same which are made by look and gesture, such as those through which the mother and child enter into mutual converse. Nature not only establishes a connection between the two, but awakens confidence in these signs as uniformly expressing the same import. Moreover, to deviate from this understood connection, to simulate thoughts and feelings which do not exist, by using signs which are appropriate to other thoughts and feelings, requires an effort on the part of any one who attempts it, and shocks and disappoints the recipient. In this sense, and for these reasons, nature is eminently veracious, and teaches lessons of natural truth and honesty before the development of moral responsibility, or the awakening of any sensibility to veracity as a duty.

So soon as the value of truth to the recipient begins to be understood, and the motives to practise it begin to be appreciated by the reflective judgment, the duty of veracity is distinctly recognized as morally imperative. The natural impulse to utter the truth, and the thought of the good which is involved in the reception of it, combine to move and command the moral person to utter the truth whenever he professes to impart knowledge. Just so fast as man generalizes and thinks, just so rapidly do his apprehensions widen, of the importance of the rule of truth as universal, and his sensibility responds to its authority as inviolable.

Distinctly
recognized at
an early
period.

The natural impulse to tell the truth is sanctioned by the reflective judgment as it thinks more widely and deeply. The

value of truth as a social bond is more and more sensitively appreciated as the child develops into manhood under the training of an upright social environment and the stimulus of honest desires. Under favor-

Sanctioned by
reflection and
experience.

able circumstances, the necessity and propriety of uttering the truth commend themselves to the assent and feelings of all classes of men. In circumstances that are most unfavorable, when private interests prompt to frequent falsehood, the man who is an habitual and a shameless liar finds it so often necessary to these very interests to learn the truth from his fellow-men, as to enforce upon his fellow-men the very demand which he violates for himself. Hence, in the multitude of cases in which he has no interests at stake, he assents to the value of truth as a general rule for mankind. For this reason, the injunction to tell the truth is one of the simplest and earliest lessons in ethics which is learned in infancy. The child can see at a glance the propriety that men should trust one another, and knows that only selfish and private interests can interfere with or oppose the spontaneous impulse to be true, or favor the impulse to be false. As the child advances in years, these convictions tend to become more distinct and more positive. They are enforced also by the authority and interests of our fellow-men, with more or less consistency and earnestness. Even when the child is tempted to lie, and even when it is trained and persuaded in special cases to deceive, the cases and reasons are confessed to be exceptional by its teachers and tempters to falsehood, and are rejected by the honest mind. Even in those demoralized communities in which falsehood is inculcated as a virtue, and the sensibility to truth seems to be nearly obliterated, the reasons for observing it are always dormant in the mind, and are ready to be awakened, while the obligation to regard them is as quickly responded to. For all practical purposes, the rule is axiomatic and self-evident: Be truthful in all your communications with your fellow-men, if you would promote their highest good.

§ 226. The *fulfilment of promises*, or the “keeping one’s word,” is nearly related to the observation of veracity, and like this duty is enforced and regulated by the law of love. A promise is a statement or expression of our purpose to perform some action which concerns our fellow-man, and to which he may adjust his own activities and plans. As the limited knowledge of men requires that they should receive knowledge from others, and veracity is thus made a necessity and a virtue; similarly, their dependence on others for direction and assistance in the future requires that they should confide in the representations which are made of their own future actions. This is pre-eminently true when the promise is the condition of future actions by the other party. The making of a promise implies that the promisee will have occasion to adjust his conduct or to regulate his interests or his expectations to what the promiser declares of his intentions. To fail to make our declaration good, may disappoint his expectations, and cause him to fail of his own designs through a more or less complicated series of events. It also disturbs the general and individual confidence more seriously than a simple mis-statement of facts, and shows a more intensely energetic and positively selfish disregard of the welfare of others. Hence the violation of a promise is rightly deemed a grosser offence than the utterance of a falsehood; and the enormity of the offence is measured by the importance of the interest which is trifled with, and the solemnity with which the promise is made. If the promise takes the form of a covenant, and is conditional upon the acts or sacrifices of another, and the transaction is so important as to involve serious deliberation and a definite understanding on both sides, the offence is regarded as still more criminal; because the selfishness is more deliberate and energetic. If the contract is made more sacred by appeals to the sanction of religion, or the use of judicial formalities, the violation of it is sometimes regarded as more than an offence against private interests: it becomes

The “keep-
ing one’s
word.”

an offence against public morality, and is punished as a crime.

We have thus far derived the duties of veracity and promise-keeping from the general obligation of benevolence. It is self-evident that no man will deny that the law of love enforces many, and perhaps all, of the duties of veracity and fidelity. The prevalence of mutual confidence, which veracity only can sustain, is too manifest and great a blessing to leave any doubt that the benevolent man must necessarily be a truth-speaking and veracious man. An habitual liar and covenant-breaker shows himself thereby to be selfishly indifferent to the well-being of his fellows.

§ 227. There are not a few moralists who require some other ground for this duty, and deny that benevolence is the sole or sufficient ground of the duty to be veracious with our fellow-men, so far as our fellow-men are concerned. But the effect upon ourselves, all will concede, is also worthy to be considered. It is an oversight and an error to overlook the effect or tendency upon ourselves of untruthfulness in word or act. The question stated more exactly would be this: So far as the duties of truth from man to man are concerned, are they enforced by any other law or principle than the law of love from man to man? Those who assert that they are, and seek for another principle, think they find it in the felt or recognized obligation to tell the truth for its own sake, aside from any direct or remote obligation derived from a regard to the general good. They hold the duty to be original and simple, to reflect to others in words or looks the truth of things or thoughts as they are. They find here the original basis or authority for veracity; although they also acknowledge that this original obligation may be supplemented by the duty of ethical love to our neighbor, in view of the natural and moral good which veracity tends to accomplish. It cannot be doubted, we think, that there

**Other
grounds than
benevolence
required by
some.**

**The question
carefully
stated.**

**Natural
impulse to
expect and
to utter the
truth.**

is an original impulse in man to speak the truth, and another impulse to expect the truth. Both these impulses, however, are purely natural: even if the moral adds to each a special energy, it is still distinguishable from each. Wollaston, in his "Religion of Nature," etc., has carried this theory to the utmost extreme, in the doctrine that the relations of right and wrong are deducible from and resolved into the relations of truth and falsehood; every good and bad action being resolved, according to him, into the expressing by action of truth or falsehood. It is easy to see how such a theory may at first view seem very plausible. It is not difficult to discern, at second thought, that the two are not co-extensive; an incorrect statement or an untrue action being in no sense equipollent with actions or purposes which are immoral.

§ 228. The question is interesting, both from a practical and speculative point of view, whether there is an independent obligation to *tell the truth for the truth's sake*.
 Is there an obligation to speak the truth for "the truth's sake"? It will be conceded, that veracity, as a moral attribute, requires a design, purpose, or intention.

An accidental but unintended failure to declare the truth, or fulfil a promise, even if either were painfully and minutely exact, would involve no moral criminality. The intention to fail to do either, if the intention rested in the act as such, would involve no more. The intention must surely respect something more than the relation of the act to reality: it must contemplate some relation of the act to some good with which human beings are concerned, either the utterer or the receiver of the declaration, one or both. The intention, also, must have some connection or relation with the ruling purpose, which we call a virtuous character, and which belongs to the virtuous man. The only common relation which we can think of is that found in human well-being as promoted by constant veracity, and enforced by ethical love to man as the common characteristic of all the activities which are virtuous. To superadd any other element,

is to introduce an element which is superfluous, and with no determinate relation to the other acts or intentions which are recognized as obligatory.

That such an addition is both superfluous and irrelevant, appears from the circumstance, that to fail to tell the truth, simply as an act of deviation from the reality of things, and aside from recklessness of the good of others, is often no sin. Certainly it is no sin, if there is no intention to mislead, and the deception or misunderstanding results from defective attention, or careless misinterpretation of the words or signs employed, for which the informant is not responsible. To mislead is of itself not always criminal, even though the informant actually deceives and disappoints; for he may do both unintentionally.

Nor is it necessarily criminal, even to *intend* to produce a false impression, as in joke or sport, when there is a tacit or explicit expectation or agreement to challenge a deceiver to do his utmost in that direction. Or if this doctrine should be challenged, as it might be, by a few theorists or over-scrupulous critics, there are cases in which to make a false communication and deliberately to intend it, is not only not criminal, but positively praiseworthy. Let a malignant enemy make a strike for my life, and let me escape by a quick movement that deceives and misleads him; as, let him pursue me along a dark passage, and let it be supposed that I make a movement as though I would go in another direction, so as to deceive him and save myself: I certainly misrepresent the facts of the case, and deceive him in respect to them; but who will say that my act is morally wrong, although it is a deliberate and designed deviation from the truth? Such an example may suffice to show that the criminality of untruth is not found in its deviation from reality and fact, but in its weakening effect upon that confidence between man and man which is most essential to man's well-being, and its intended and selfish disregard of the same.

Not always
wrong to
convey a false
impression.

§ 229. To the maintenance of this confidence, a uniform and unbroken habit of true and exact utterances on the part of all men is absolutely essential. Were every man to deviate from the truth in a few instances, the confidence of men in one another would be weakened to an enormous extent. Were this to be done in those cases in which it might seem to be for the advantage of the person who is disappointed, the effect would be the same. The habit of hesitation and questioning on the part of the deceiver would weaken still further the confidence of men in one another, and even in themselves. To speak the truth, not unfrequently requires courage. To fail to speak it, evinces cowardice, especially when the temptation to deviate addresses one's fear to offend. The habit of lying is one which gains a strong hold of the inner man, especially of the young, at a rate which is frightfully rapid. The virtues of the Spartan code — to endure hardship, to suffer pain without complaint, to defend one's self, and *to speak the truth* — have, from the earliest periods, been classed together as among the heroic virtues. It is certain, that in all those communities in which these virtues do not prevail, and are not honored, weakness and rottenness have begun. Lying in schools, lying in social intercourse, lying in politics, lying in newspapers, lying in the churches, lying or even habitual exaggeration in the pulpit, characterize general degeneracy, and forebode rapid decay and demoralization.

§ 230. The question has not infrequently been asked, and differently answered, whether it is ever allowable to deceive; whether it can ever be right to tell or act a falsehood, or to break one's promises. That it is often necessary to fail to fulfil one's promises to the exact letter, is conceded. In respect to the cases supposed, and the reasons which are adduced on either side, much difference of opinion prevails. Supposed and actual cases of necessity have been adduced in great numbers, under which deviations from the truth have been justified; and the questions have been urged

Veracity
as a habit.

Is it morally
right ever to
deceive?

with great earnestness, whether, even in cases so extreme as those which are cited, it is ever right knowingly to deceive. In general it may be said, that if the case is perfectly clear that the deviation from the truth will neither weaken the mutual confidence of man in man, nor tend to form or strengthen a tendency to lightly esteem the truth, the deviation may be allowed. That cases should occur which are exceptional to all the ordinary rules of external conduct, is no singular or strange event in the application of the moral code. As we have already seen, with the exception of a few classes of external actions, there are a great majority of commands and prohibitions which admit of now and then an exception; the spirit of the rule, or the intention which it is designed to manifest and fulfil, being supposed to require another external action than that by which it is ordinarily expressed (§ 72). The moving story which is told in the letters of Pliny may answer for a great variety of cases, unlike in their details, but similar

Story told
in Pliny's
letters.

in principle. The husband of Arria was very dangerously ill at the same time with two of their sons. The father inquired often concerning these sons, and her answers were uniformly encouraging. One of the sons died just as the father had reached the crisis of his disease. The mother wiped away her tears, and approached the sick-bed of her husband with a cheerful air; and, as he inquired after her son, she replied, "He is better," and rushed from the room unable to restrain her grief. Was such a falsehood criminal? There are few who will say that it was. Physicians are often brought into extremities as pressing as this. The same is true of those who have the care of weaklings from passion, intemperance, partial mania, or nervous prostration.

Promises, too, are often extorted by threats of exposure of evil to others, or by threats of violence or murder.

Are falsehoods criminal under circumstances like these? May promises of the above-named classes, or of any other, be broken? Under the pressure of cases so

Promises
extorted by
threats.

extreme, novel and special — not to say far-fetched — principles are sometimes sought for or resorted to, in order to furnish relief from those obligations to veracity and covenant-keeping which ordinarily hold good. For example, it is urged, that a promise made to a robber is made to one who is *humani generis hostis*, with whom no promise is binding; or, if it is extorted by threats, it is unlawfully obtained, and therefore has no element of moral authority. Against these reasons the supposed Divine will is cited, which is assumed to require a literal compliance with the prescription to literal veracity; and the duty of confidence in God as the special guardian of truth, even under the most trying and doubtful cases, is assumed as relieving every doubt, and prescribing literal truth in every conceivable complication. To all these attempts to enforce absolute rules, with no real or apparent exceptions, it is enough to reply, that in respect to the rule of veracity, as in regard to every other rule of external conduct, *exceptio probat regulam*. The act and spirit of love and uprightness should be supreme and absolute in controlling our communications with our fellow-men. No deviation from literal veracity should be allowed which may weaken, or tend to weaken, their confidence in us or in our fellows, nor any which should weaken or set aside the habit in ourselves of a frank and ready utterance of the literal truth in our daily speech. A liar is always intensely selfish, and usually more or less of a coward. The man who is controlled by the law of duty will fail neither in spirit nor in act to speak the truth in his heart and with his words, whenever his words have any importance in respect to that confidence which is a sacred necessity in the intercourse of man with man.

§ 231. The question is also often urged, whether promises

Are promises
always
binding?

are or are not binding in the many cases in which the circumstances under which they were made have very greatly changed from those which were anticipated when the promise was given. The difficulty of deciding whether, in view of these changes, one or both of the parties

may be released, arises from the difficulty of determining whether it was implied and practically understood, at the time when the promise was given, that under any contingency the promise might become invalid. This question is often very difficult to decide, and the parties to the promise will often take opposite sides in accordance with their opposing interests. The equity of each case can only be reached by an intimate knowledge of a great variety of circumstances. Difficulties of this sort always seem to be unfortunate, and the want of clearness and authority in the opinions of casuists, and their failures to find solid principles by which to decide special cases, is often urged against the sacredness of moral distinctions and the supreme authority of the moral law. Such a conclusion is obviously unjust, and may be seen to be so on the slightest reflection. The intention or purpose required is never doubtful; the only possible question which can arise pertains to the external act or sacrifice which each party is bound to make by the rule or test which is, on the whole, the most just and salutary. The immense advantage of emphasizing the intention as distinguished from the external act, and of disciplining the individual and the race to look at all questions of casuistry from both sides, immeasurably counterbalances all the objections against admitting an exception to a moral rule which is nearly universal. The glory and strength of the law of duty is found in the fact that it is spiritual and internal, and can adapt itself to the varying conditions of mankind in its external commands concerning both words and deeds. While it enforces the strictest compliance with the letter whenever the integrity of a man is to be tested or tried by external fidelity in a word or act, it is tolerant and charitable in the extreme whenever ignorance or weakness, or any of the manifold limitations of ignorance or weakness, require its lenient judgment.

CHAPTER XI.

DUTIES OF GENERAL BENEFICENCE.

§ 232. THE law of benevolence commands us to love all our fellow-men. This applies to the will and affections, to the disposition and character. When this benevolence is expressed in acts that promote their welfare, it becomes *beneficence*. The law of beneficence commands us to do good to our fellows as we have opportunity, for the reasons already given, and to do so by external actions, — by words and deeds of kindness, and useful effect, as manifestations and realizations of our feelings. Both these laws, as we have seen, when blended into one, require us in heart and deed to concede to our fellows their rights, and to be truthful in our communications and promises. Benevolence, when it concedes and respects the claims and rights of men, becomes justice. Justice and truth are among the cardinal virtues, inasmuch as upon the practice of both, society depends for its integrity, its order, and its security, and all the blessings which are essential to human civilization. These duties we have already discussed.

§ 233. But these are not all the duties which men owe their fellow-men. The general duties of men to one another are by no means limited to justice and veracity. There is a great variety of other offices which men are capable of performing, and to which they are prompted by the impulses of sympathy. *They can*

Duties
already
provided for.

Number and
variety of
duties as
yet to be
considered.

supply the wants of their fellows, they can assist them in their labors, they can comfort them in their sorrows, they can rescue them from ignorance, they can reform their manners, they can prevent and recover them from vice and crime. All these duties are included in and enforced by the moral obligation to love. It is not always easy to decide to whom these duties are especially owed, nor by what methods we may best discharge the duties which we acknowledge. It is most important, however, that we recognize each of these obligations in whatever form it presents itself, and understand the reasons which enforce it.

§ 234. There are not a few theorizers who deny the obligation to any duties of beneficence proper, beyond those which are imposed by natural justice or political necessity or the relations of kindred, which, somehow, — but how, they do not explain, — seem to impose some sort of claim which it is hard to deny, even with the aid of a well-compacted and otherwise plausible theory. The moralists and publicists of the school of Hobbes denied that man has any disinterested affection for his fellow, and asserted that man is naturally hostile to his kind. They logically deduced all obligations of helpfulness and co-operation from the simple necessity of combination against a common foe, and failed to recognize any duty whatever as springing from sympathy or affection, for which they found no place in man's nature, and no justification except as a disguised form of selfishness.

Theorists
who deny any
positive obli-
gation to
these duties.

The sociologist of the evolutionist school recognizes under the name of *altruism* a derived form of love to man; but he limits its operation to love for the community as given up to the freest and fullest play of the struggle for existence terminating in the survival of the fittest. *Altruism*, moreover, when explained by this system, is as truly a developed or derived affection under the processes of association, and the interaction of hostile elements, as the same affection under another name in the school of Hobbes.

The altruism
of modern
schools.

They contend simply for the freest recognition of the so-called natural rights, and all others which grow out of a highly organized and differentiated social system. Love and duty, in their theory, are satisfied under the desire and claim of each individual to be let alone that he may care for himself. So soon as these rights are responded to, they forbid the individual or the community to act singly or organized for the help of the public or the individual, as being injurious to both the giver and the receiver, and an offence against the fundamental law of individual and social development. In fact, if not in form, they contend that the inculcation of the duty to help one's neighbor is now behind the times, and rebuked by all sound philosophical teachings. The comprehensive maxim which they recognize as the sum of duty in loving our neighbor is simply this: to

The struggle for existence. leave him alone in the enjoyment of his rights, and to let him struggle and shift for himself in providing for his wants, without asking for either co-operation or sympathy. This doctrine is an exaggerated misapplication of certain theories of social science in respect to the administration of public charities, the expediency of governmental action in education, and manifold other organized enterprises for the common good. Many of these enterprises which were organized with the best intentions, and commenced with glowing zeal and sanguine hopes, have failed to realize the expectations of their originators, or proved examples of the certain failure of movements undertaken on false social or economic principles. From the partial or total failure of such enterprises, or their unfaithful administration for lack of supervision or fidelity, the conclusion has been reached, that the public welfare is most effectually promoted in every particular, by leaving every man to act and sacrifice for himself, and allowing his neighbor to do the same. This reasoning also assumes that there is a natural sphere of self-relying activity assigned to every man by the progress of evolution, and fixed by the temporary permanence of his organic life, within which he has

acknowledged rights, i.e., the necessary conditions for independent activity and development. Within this sphere he needs no help, should ask and receive no favors, can be benefited by no co-operation, and cheered and comforted by no sympathy.

§ 235. How conspicuously untrue this theory is to the facts of human nature, and the requirements of human experience, need hardly be argued. It is certainly true, that, in the family in which man begins his existence, man is dependent upon his fellow, and asks aid by appeals that call forth the interchange of sympathy and help. Moreover, the help which he most needs and soonest receives is sympathy, as expressed to and for himself. In this condition he passes many years of his life. The same is true of the adult man. In every one of his movements and labors and hopes and disappointments, he craves and needs something which his fellow-man can do for him and can give to him. The man who responds to these appeals with emotional sympathy and practical aid blesses "him that gives and him that takes." Not merely is this true between man and man as individuals, but it is true between man and man as united in social organisms. Indeed, the civilized man needs and can receive the help of his fellow-man a thousandfold more than the savage, for the reason that he is civilized; his wants being multiplied immensely by that very circumstance, and his dependence on the co-operation of a greater number of his fellow-men being more absolute. He is also more sensitive to deprivation than the man in a less highly organized community, and for this reason pleads more loudly for sympathy or assistance. Personally he is feebler in consequence of his artificial life, though organically he may be immensely stronger: as when, for example, by a touch of his finger he can explode a mine that will destroy a thousand lives; or send a telegram that will devastate a kingdom, or bless an empire, whose people are numbered by millions.

Sympathy
natural and
necessary to
man.

But even in these cases the willing and personal co-operation of multitudes of men must all be counted on, or the chain of blessing is broken. The wires of the telegraph may be cut, or demoralization may disintegrate an army on which the ruler has relied. Manifest events may interrupt the functions of this complicated organic life. It would also seem, in one aspect of the operation of evolution, that, as every member of the community becomes more highly individualized, each must come into a more various and sensitive need of the assistance and sympathy of his fellow-men; and for this reason, the obligation on the part of both to give and receive help must necessarily be intensified. What this theory should require is true in fact. The more highly man is civilized, and the more sensitively he feels himself to be a part of an organism, the more numerous are the needs which his fellow-men are able, and thereby are morally obliged, to supply. For these reasons we conclude, that under the law of benevolence, in every condition of existence, and at every stage of development, men are bound to supply many of the wants of their fellows, and to lend them co-operation and sympathy. Moreover, this obligation is increased, rather than weakened, by the exigencies of artificial life, and the complications of modern society.

§ 236. Four generic cases may be supposed to arise, each of which furnishes a ground for a special rule of beneficent action.

(1) The first is that of indolent want. My fellow-man is in want, but is able to help himself. He has insufficient food, or clothing, or fuel, or medical service. He is able to supply these needs; but he is improvident, or lazy, or deliberately determined that his neighbors or the community shall furnish him the living which the world owes him, as he practically claims. If the case is individual, and no one is the sufferer but himself, he certainly ought not to be relieved, except for the moment. His physical wants may be real, but

his moral wants are more serious; and these can only be relieved by starvation, or cold, or severe neglect, or, if the laws provide, by penal infliction. No moral obligation rests on the individual or the community to relieve the actual wants of every man who is in need, simply because he suffers. It may be and it often is true, that his most serious wants can be most effectually relieved by denying him such relief, and forcing him to labor for himself, or subjecting him to punishment.

§ 237. (2) The second case, we may suppose, is that of necessary and useful co-operative action. By com- (2) **Mutual co-operation.**
bined activity, ten or a hundred men can accomplish what a thousand men acting singly can never effect. The need may be the simple union of individual personal energies, in order to effect a desirable object: the need is social, but still it is as real a need as the presence or agency of a combination of many physical elements or forces to accomplish a physical effect which is acknowledged to be good. The occasions are manifold in which the aggregation of physical force, or pecuniary aid, or personal sympathy, is essential to the achievement of some public benefit. Whenever the consenting activity of many is imperatively required, union emphatically becomes strength, and co-operation for the public welfare is an instant duty. The influence of public sentiment, as asserted and sustained by the consenting and uttered voice of all the individuals of a community, is another example of social and sympathetic power. In every case of this sort, every man will feel, whatever his theory may be, that benevolence requires that he should supply the public want, which is none the less real because the public is a sufferer in the persons of its individual members, and the want can only be supplied by the combined activities of a score or a thousand individuals. The maxim used in such cases, and justified by the professed theories of some moralists, — *Every man for himself*, — is not only meanly selfish, but essentially immoral; because it rests on an essentially untrue assumption, that every man can, if he will, live and act for himself alone.

When every man sets up for himself, and practically or theoretically isolates himself from his kind, every man suffers more or less, as God or nature has made us "members one of another." It is literally true in every sense, that "no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." It follows, that a forward and sympathizing public spirit in supplying the wants of the community is in a certain sense morally imperative. The command is of the highest authority, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Similarly, in smaller communities and limited neighborhoods, the duty of co-operation in the supply of the wants of our fellow-men, which are common to them and ourselves, is, if possible, more obvious.

The duty of co-operation as a source of united strength is so obvious for reasons both of morality and self-interest, as to induce many writers on ethics and economics to contend that private ownership of property should be abolished, and that all the operations of domestic and social labor should be conducted on the principle of partnership. The impracticability of devising any feasible scheme for the administration of such a theory, and the actual failure of most of the communistic associations which have been put into operation, have brought them into general disfavor.

By a natural re-action they have induced not a few publicists to deny that the public welfare is promoted by co-operation of any kind beyond that which is involved in the most limited and self-regarding business partnership. These considerations have even been carried farther, and induced some writers to contend that co-operation of every sort, except as it is dictated by the most interested policy, is hostile both to the individual and the public welfare. No man who recognizes any moral obligation whatever, as it would seem, can possibly deny that every individual ought to be willing to help his fellow-men. The only point which is open to question is, whether man is capable of being helped; that is, whether, in the long-run, to attempt or to seem to help him, is not, in fact, to hinder and embarrass him. It is no answer to this question, as a question of practical ethics, to say that, in general, the individual and the community will thrive most effectively when their activities are conducted on "business principles," and each man looks out for himself. So long as union is strength, and so long also as co-operation oftentimes multiplies energy, and frequently in a geometrical ratio, so long is it the duty of men to impart to one another assistance of every descrip-

tion in activities, advice, and sympathy, in the varied departments of life. For this we have the most attractive examples which the world has ever seen, and have reason to know that the established law of human welfare is a law of generous co-operation between man and man in their organized and individual capacity. But while this is true in general, and a most important truth, it is also true, that the extent to which organized co-operation can be prosecuted with success can be determined only by instructed experience. We find overwhelming reasons to conclude that communistic principles can never take the place of separate ownership in property, or supersede the family, or set aside civil government. On the other hand, the evidence is constantly accumulating, that the principles of co-operation may be safely and wisely applied in ways which are as yet untried, and with a success which has never yet been dreamed of. That there will always be occasion for help and sympathy from man to man, we are confident, from what we know of human nature and the tendencies of human history as these reveal the plans and processes of nature and of God. We cannot conceive it possible that the best ends of man's moral education and the best use of his powers can ever be accomplished, except as every individual shall be constantly summoned to help his neighbor in constant proffers and services of good, and never-ceasing ministrations of sympathy.

§ 238. (3) The third class of opportunities for help are cases of unavoidable calamity or misfortune. To these (3) *Unavoidable calamity.* should be added the more serious, and often more hopeless, cases of ignorance and vice. Calamity and misfortune abound in human society. To a large extent, but not wholly, they are the result of want of foresight, or want of self-control. The evils which men suffer are largely the consequences of imprudence, or indolence, or passion, or appetite. These consequences are designed to protect and warn against the individual and social offences which are committed against natural and social laws. It does not follow, however, that these sufferings should not, in many cases, be alleviated or removed by human kindness and sympathy and help. Even if this were the rule so far as the responsible parties are concerned, it would not apply to the larger number of those who are innocent sufferers by the fault of others. The economy of social life is not an economy of pitiless retribution only: it includes an economy of recovery and pardon for many

offences against a multitude of laws, — laws physical and laws moral.

For responsible and irresponsible sufferers, the appeal for sympathy and help is constantly uttered to the benevolent impulse, and enforced by the aid of a special sensibility of responsive pity. The impulse is one of the most powerful emotions that move the soul of man, the most difficult to resist when it is in action, and the most obstinate in its tenacity, even when frequently resisted and persistently overcome. The man who would resist and overcome this impulse does violence to one of the strongest and most tenacious forces of his being. This fact alone by no means invests it with a right of supreme control; but it indicates that it was designed sometimes to govern the actions, and ought sometimes to have sway and room in the heart and over the conduct of the individual and the community. Following the rule already accepted, that every one of the emotions should sometimes prevail, and find a sphere of influence and effect, we conclude that human suffering and sorrow ought at least sometimes to be relieved. When, and how often, can only be decided by the special circumstances of the sufferer, and the other demands upon the benevolence of his friend or neighbor.

§ 239. Should this relief ever be individual, or should it always be organized? Conceding that it is both individual effort. right and expedient, as modern experience would teach, that the relief of misfortune should, to a large extent, be rendered by organized charity, it still remains true that such relief should very often be furnished by the agency of individuals. Relief of this description is often to be preferred to any which can be imparted by social organization, in being more intelligent, more discriminating, and, above all, more abundant in sympathy. It is eminently true that charity thus administered is twice blessed: "it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes," blessing him that takes with the priceless element of personal love and sympathy, and blessing him that

gives with manifold experiences of that peculiar good which attends unselfish ministrations of any kind. The remark of Dr. Thomas Arnold will always hold good for all men, that “prayer, and the visitation of the poor, seem both to be necessary to keep a man in his right place of duty and temper with respect to himself and his God.”

§ 240. (4) Another form of want is that of ignorance or vice. The want in either of these cases is actual, and none the less but the more serious for the reason that the sufferer is unaware of his need, and never can fully appreciate its extent, and, maybe, is offended and enraged by proffered help. The duty is certainly none the less real, and none the less imperative, because it is difficult to be discharged. The extremity of the need is often an urgent reason why the duty of relief should be rendered with the greatest efficiency. Duties of this sort are among the most important which we owe to our fellow-men. Ignorance limits and enfeebles the intellect, degrades and perverts the sensibilities, and misleads and hardens the will. Vice fixes the man in voluntary and shameless bestial degradation. Either by itself, or both united, degrade and weaken humanity, lower the social tone, dry up the sources of individual and public wealth, prepare the way for physical calamities, and diminish or destroy the public vitality. If men owe any duties to their fellow-men, they are under obligation to remove these fountains of evil so far as they can.

(4) **Ignorance and vice.**

The difficulties are peculiar in consequence of the fact that the ignorant are satisfied with their condition, either because they do not believe that they are capable of any thing better, or, more frequently, because they do not practically conceive of the better as possible. Complete or well-nigh perfect ignorance may be confounded with knowledge and the satisfaction which attends it; but its completeness is exemplified by its incapacity to believe or appreciate any thing higher or better than its own degradation. Vice is often, not to say usually, aroused to

hatred and envy and selfish passion, by the efforts which are made for its abandonment and cure.

§ 241. These difficulties enforce, rather than weaken, the duty of the instructed and virtuous to reclaim and recover those of their neighbors who are in this desperate plight. They are morally bound to do them good in these particulars, to the utmost of their power. They are also equally bound, and sometimes by an added obligation, to *prevent* these evils and the causes of them. Ignorance as a prevailing calamity, by its very nature, can be more effectually prevented than it can be healed. The same is true of vice. The power of habit and of social influences is such as to open the way for instruction and moral influence with the young, and to indicate that efforts directed to their culture are likely to succeed. While every effort may be thwarted and fail by reason of the perversion of the individual will, yet the advantages of knowledge and of the power of self-restraint are such as to compel the confidence, and to force the consent, of a generation of youth to which the proper appliances are presented with moderate fidelity and skill. Hence the obligation to use these appliances, and to favor them, in respect to the young, is inexorable and supreme. No one can love his neighbor as himself, in any sense, who does not endeavor to save the children and youth of his neighborhood, and it may be of his country, from ignorance and vice.

§ 242. The duty and right of the community as organized into civil government, to prevent and remove ignorance and vice by means of public arrangements, will be considered in its place. We are at present concerned with the duty in these directions of the individual man, and of men as voluntarily associated to extirpate and prevent those formidable evils. It can hardly be contended that any public arrangements, however skilfully devised and effectively applied, can supersede the necessity and duty of individual activity to its utmost in addition to all that the public can do. Public economies can never dispense with individual fidelity and zeal. The more elaborate and complete they may be, the more indispensable need is there of individual zeal and activity. The advantage of individual and personal relief over

that which is organized and official, as has already been suggested, is that it furnishes an opportunity for a more exact knowledge of the wants of the person who is assisted, and for the exercise of personal sympathy in the act of relief. While in many cases it may be better for the recipient, and better for his benefactor, that he should receive assistance through a public agent, there are also many in which the assistance loses more than half its value if it is not prompted and directed by such a knowledge of the wants or sorrows of the recipient as only an individual can attain. In many cases, also, the assistance most needed is that personal sympathy which only one individual can impart to another. This is especially true when the needs to be supplied and the wants to be relieved are such moral wants as only personal knowledge and personal love can understand or reach. Whatever may be the improvements attained and achieved in the administration of charities of every kind, the time will never come when individual agencies and individual administration will not be required, and when individual service will not be a duty. The principles by which individual duties to special classes of individuals may be determined, so far as these can be expressed in language or embodied in rules, still remain to be discussed.

§ 243. Besides the individual needs of ignorance and vice, which can be most advantageously met by individual effort, there are also social needs of both descriptions which require united and vigorous social movements in the way of prevention and reform. There are many reasons why the state in its organized capacity can perform these functions only to a limited extent. A wide margin is consequently left for voluntary activity in the associated movements of individual men. These too have their limitations and obligations. The object of such efforts is to arouse public attention to facts that have been overlooked, — perhaps in the light of principles which have been disregarded, — and to awaken feelings of condemnation or alarm which had been either repressed or weakened, in order to excite individuals and the public to repentance or reformation. Feudal subjection, domestic slavery, the use and sale of alcoholic and intoxicating liquors, licentious practices, and gambling are some of the vicious institutions and practices which have been the subjects of these social reforms. Many general abuses, less obnoxious

**Necessity
for social
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in their moral relations, in business, politics, manners, and amusements, have also been made the subjects of social animadversion and discussion. Such associations are perfectly legitimate, pre-eminently when they are organized for great moral ends and under pressing moral needs. By means of them, some of the most important advances of the last half-century have been achieved in political, ethical, and social blessings. It is more than probable, that, in the future, they will be employed with a still more manifest and beneficent efficiency. The influences that are employed are the social sympathies of man, — the capacity of one man to discern and feel any truth more clearly when it is commended to his conscience by the condemnation of any of his fellow-men, especially if enforced by the consenting judgment of a great number. This is pre-eminently true when the truth is enforced by the ardor and earnestness of the conscientious convictions of enlightened and honest men. So potent is this force, that it has been taken by a numerous school of philosophers to be the only source and strength of moral truth. “The law of opinion” (§ 10), as it is called by Locke, has always energized and sustained the law of conscience, and given it more or less of impulse and support. It follows, that the ethical principles which at once enforce and regulate the employment of this agency should be carefully considered.

§ 244. (1) Such movements should be inspired by sound ethical feelings and judgments respecting the conduct against which they are arrayed. Reformers of every kind should first of all be certain that the act or habit or institution which they condemn is, so far as they condemn it, in fact morally wrong. The indiscriminate denunciation of many outward acts or practices — as theatre-going, using games of chance, drinking a glass of wine, or the like — is itself wrong, and can never suffice as the watchword of a successful social movement, for the reason that it will not carry the convictions of so many men, for a considerable time at least, as to warrant final success. A principle overstated or falsely stated, or the extravagant and reckless use of facts, is certain to re-act against any cause in whose service it is used, and often awakens prejudices and distrust against all reforming organi-

**Conditions of
success: (1)
The evil must
be justly
judged.**

zations. The only strength of such a movement is in the assent of the convicted conscience when assailed by an obvious moral truth so nearly axiomatic as to command ready assent and universal conviction.

(2) The occasion may be of temporary expediency or necessity. If so, the reform should be argued on this ground, and no other, with all the force which the occasion will justify. Many actions and customs, which are in themselves personally innocent, may be so interwoven and overgrown with offensive and injurious associations as to be themselves open to serious objections. For the time, such practices are of such evil influence as to justify a social protest against them, and to warrant the demand for a total disuse, at least for a time. In view of these associations, and the evils which would follow were they allowed without a protest, it may be a duty publicly to protest against such acts and customs by a social movement. But the grounds of such a protest should always represent the actual convictions of those who share and express them. To begin or to urge any such movement on false or factitious grounds, is bad in policy and worse in morality. To undertake to manufacture a factitious social conscience, or to consent to it, is to offend against one's inward integrity, for the sake of what must be a temporary, and may be a hollow, social reformation.

(2) The occasion may be temporary.

(3) Generally, in any movement of reform, a man should never be held responsible except for his own convictions and the expression of them. It is true, he is also responsible for candor and frankness and friendliness of spirit, and all those personal qualities which are fitted to gain the sympathetic regard of others. But, so far as the matter of the reform is concerned, he is responsible only for his own convictions, as earnestly and ardently enforced. With the constant and earnest expression of these convictions, with energy, frankness, and sympathetic feeling, his duty terminates.

(3) No man should be held beyond his personal convictions.

If his opinions or acts are misunderstood, if his acts or arguments make a different impression from that which he designs them to effect, he may offend the public conscience, and hinder the cause which he designs to further. He may offend the conscience of good men, and be counted as morally unsound, or treacherous to a good cause. He has no right to do either if he can avoid it by honest methods. He is responsible for the impression he makes, so far as he is aware of it. For this reason, a man is bound to see to it that the true import and reasons of his act should be fully made known, whenever they concern his attitude in respect to any social movement in which he allows himself to take part. He may not fall back on his personal independence, if by that he means a license to be indifferent or reckless as to what others think in respect to any cause which is brought into question. He may say, indeed, What business has the community to concern themselves with what I do, or how I think? "Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" To this question, which is often

asked, the answer is direct: Your liberty to have your own opinion in regard to the act in question is not at all challenged. What is denied or called in question is liberty of another sort; viz., the liberty to be indifferent as to what interpretation shall be put upon your act by others, whether it is or is not correct. In other words, every man is morally bound to see that his position with respect to every important question of social reform shall be distinctly understood. To the question, Why should the community concern itself with what I do, or with how I think? the answer is pertinent: Every man is bound to make his influence tell on the right side, and, to this end, to make the meaning of his conduct unequivocal and emphatic.

(4) It may be a binding duty for a man to refrain from many actions innocent in themselves, if there is danger that his actual feelings and purposes shall be misinterpreted, and thereby his actual influence shall be given to evil. This is the true interpretation of the maxim, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." It does not signify that I am to refrain from innocent actions because a fanatic or simpleton may plead my example, when he knows or might know that the act is allowed by me with a good conscience, and is therefore wholly innocent in me, whatever it may be in himself. But it does signify, that if an act which I know to be innocent and right shall make a simple or sinning man morally to err, because he misconstrues the moral import of the act, I will refrain from the act as I would avoid tempting a fellow-man to a crime. I may not destroy or tempt any man to evil by an act which he shall construe to be held by me as morally wrong, and yet performed by me though evil, unless there are other decisive and prevailing reasons why the act should be allowed.

(5) The failures or weaknesses that attend not a few social movements for important moral ends furnish no argument against the legitimacy or importance of this class of duties. In social movements of which the ends are desirable, and the methods are wise, there is more than the aggregate strength of the individuals who embark in them. Public opinion, when it moves strongly under these conditions, has an organic force. This force is the product of that common sympathy which blends individual feelings into a social agency of generous love and self-sacrifice. This ethical love is sanctioned by the approving conscience of each and of all. Its appeal to those whom it would benefit is backed by the rational and united conviction of a great community animated by one spirit, impelling to an end which is wholly good, and responded to by the convicted consciences of all whom they address. But, resistless and legitimate as is such an organic force when it is inspired by the truth, the weakness of a factitious reform, whether its ends are doubtful or the means are illegiti-

mate, is equally manifest by the contrast. In such movements, violent assertion takes the place of solid argument; lawless vituperation, of sympathetic appeal; sophistical rhetoric, of convincing logic. The one is as a chorus of conspiring voices sustained by a well-trained orchestra, that constrains to admiring sympathy; the other, a crowd of inharmonious performers, that disgust and repel by a braying dissonance of sound. Each in its way exemplifies the truth that no social effort can succeed, whose ends are moral, if it does not utter the truth in a loving spirit.

These principles, it will be observed, apply equally to the special duties which respect social reforms, and the general duty of wisely directing our personal influence for moral ends; it being remembered that both are enforced by the general obligation to promote the moral welfare of our fellow-men in every possible method. (Cf. FRANCIS WAYLAND, *The Limitations of Human Responsibility*: Boston, 1838.)

CHAPTER XII.

DUTIES TO BENEFACTORS, FRIENDS, AND ENEMIES; OR,
THE SPECIAL PERSONAL AFFECTIONS.

§ 245. DUTIES of this class are owed to those single individuals with whom we are connected by special acts and relations, such as give rise to special sympathies or antipathies. These acts and relations may be agreeable or disagreeable; the emotions may be attractive or repellent. The relations are grounded in the constitution of man, and consequently evoke certain natural emotions and impulses, which are manifested in appropriate actions. They are universal to man, being certain to exist under the circumstances which are common to the human race. The affections, also, as natural forces, both unite and repel. As regulated by the will, whether in the form of indulgence or repression, they are subject to the law of duty, and take on a moral character. So far as this is true, men become responsible for their affections, and the actions to which they impel. The objective grounds of these duties are certain relationships which connect man with his fellow-beings, and fit him to exist in the various spheres which make up human society. Their subjective grounds are the emotions and impulses which correspond to these relationships.

The affec-
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As natural emotions, they obey those psychical laws which are common to all the elementary feelings of our nature. Under the operation of association, these subtile threads of original feeling are woven into complex and many-shaded tissues, which are expressed through the various words and tones and gestures

In what
sense are
they natural
and moral.

which make up the language of feeling. As moral, they are capable of a still greater diversity, so far as they are modified by voluntary indulgence or control. As these natural and moral elements are combined, they characterize the separate personality of every human being. This personality is individual so soon as every man begins to exist with tendencies or repellencies which are his own. It is individualized still further, as these forces are modified by his physical, intellectual, and personal environment. But it is more conspicuously and consummately individual as the moral will stamps its impress upon these natural characteristics, and moulds them to its service, under the stimulus and control of the law of duty, or in deviation from and resistance to that law.

§ 246. Though we are bound to our fellow-men, as men, by a common sympathy, they are not to us objects of equal interest, nor do they impart to us equal pleasure. Were all men alike, and did they interest one another with sympathies alike in quality and degree, humanity would be reduced to a monotonous uniformity. All its richness and variety would be sacrificed to a tame similarity. Each man would be the counterpart of his fellow. Personality would be robbed of all its charms, and the opportunity for individual freedom and individual development would be excluded. Men are individual, not only by reason of their separate personality, but by the many-shaded and many-hued individual differences which meet us at every turn of human life, and are constantly expressed in language and behavior. We have no reason to doubt that the original endowments and manifestations of human sensibility are indefinitely various. When to these differences of original structure, there is added a difference of circumstances, there is necessarily a still greater difference in their products, in character and language, in manners and tastes. When to these are added the activities of the free and responsible will, there is opportunity for still greater variety in individual idiosyncrasies.

Men are unlike in their nature.

§ 247. It is not surprising, — it naturally and necessarily follows, — that men thus differentiated should attract and repel one another by natural and artificial sympathies and antipathies. Whether these attractive and repelling emotions are reasonable or unreasonable, whether they are dignified or trivial, their practical significance is enormous in bringing men together or holding them apart. Men like or dislike one another by a natural sympathy or repulsion, aside from and before any voluntary or moral interference with these original impulses. Upon these original tendencies are superinduced manifold secondary affections towards or against the individuals whom they encounter. The mere fact of familiar and frequent acquaintance or close proximity brings into bold relief and conspicuous prominence, agreeable or disagreeable characteristics, whether of manners, of speech, of habits, or character. The nearer and the more frequently men come together, the more active is the attraction or repulsion which they exert upon each other. The circumstance that we have been associated in any activity, that we have learned to know one another intimately, that our tastes are similar or unlike, that we like or dislike the same people, the same employments, or the same books, or that we do or do not hold the same practical principles, tends to intensify any natural or original sympathy or antipathy for or against every individual whom we know. If we have had occasion to confide in a man, and found him open or concealed, true or false, magnanimous or mean, any original tendency towards or against him is either intensified, counteracted, or overcome. If he has indicated voluntary or personal friendliness or hostility towards ourselves, and has manifested these feelings by his actions, our sympathy or antipathy is necessarily increased.

They differ
in sympathies
and antipa-
thies.

These lead to
voluntary
love and
dislike.

§ 248. Out of these natural sympathies and antagonisms, joined with varying circumstances and opportunities of intercourse and knowledge, there grows the natural foundation for involuntary friendship and

love on the one hand, or for voluntary or moral hostility on the other. If we designate the first by *liking*, we should call it the natural growth of the sensibilities and affections, the joint production of nature and opportunity. If we apply and limit it to the second, we should define love to be the voluntary product of these likings or dislikings, so far as they are modified by the personal or individual will, in direction, repression, or indulgence. In this way each individual finds in his social experience and development a special training and varied opportunity to which his will and moral personality impart an ethical character. His affections of liking and disliking are individual in more than one sense. They are individual so far as they are the results of his natural constitution. They are individualized still further, so far as they are moulded by the social environment of our fellow-men. They are more conspicuously individual, so far as the moral personality stamps upon them its character as ethically right or wrong, as moulded and tested by the law of duty.

§ 249. But what is the law of duty here, and what place does it take with respect to those natural and individual affections which attract and repel men? Does equal and universal benevolence to all men permit special and limited affections towards some, and the actions which such affections would inspire? If so, on what ground, and by what authority, does it sanction and command these limitations to a few? How can impartial benevolence enjoin unequal love? How can disinterested benevolence enjoin what seems to be an intensely interested affection, which always isolates and often idolizes its object? On what general principle can these vexed questions be answered? and by what criterion can these answers be justified in theory and applied in practice?

The law of duty with respect to both.

Rationalistic and sentimental theories.

These questions have been variously answered in the spirit of opposite theories. Some moralists of the rationalistic school have made the law of love, as inter-

preted by them, to require us to feel and act towards all men alike, in the conscientious disregard or the stern repression of all those special feelings which attract or repel us with respect to individual men. This doctrine has been carried to the extreme of theoretical and practical fanaticism by sundry *doctrinaires* of both atheistic and Christian schools. The French republicans of a certain type, in the first Revolution, formally required that no appellations of endearment or family affection should be allowed which would recognize any other relationship of duty or affection than that of common citizenship. Ascetics, in all the Christian centuries, have inculcated the duty of mortifying the loving affections between man and man, as essentially hostile to a disinterested love of God and an impartial love to his creatures. Sundry sentimentalists, on the other hand, would find in the natural strength or tenderness of any emotion, whether friendly or hostile, the supreme law for its regulation. The fanaticism is equally unreasonable which rejects all the defensive and primitive affections as essentially unloving and unlovely, with that which finds, in the energy or tenderness or warmth of a fond or romantic affection, the sanction of its lawful supremacy under every variety of circumstances. By a similar error it finds in the so-called natural relationships, as of country or family or church, the ultimate authority for the duty which it sanctions and enforces. When carried a step farther, sentimentalism would sanction the breach of the marriage-vow, and the abnegation of the marriage relation, at the impulse of what are called *elective affinities*, and find in the caprice of unregulated passion the final authority for the personal and even the sexual associations.

It would seem that neither of these theories can be wholly in the right, and that some principle remains to be discovered which will do justice to what is true in each. That principle is furnished in the assumption, which we are authorized to make, that the well-being of men is promoted by indulging and strengthening their special affections,

Neither is
wholly in
the right.

whether friendly or hostile, only as regulated by a supreme regard to the highest good of the receiver and giver. At first thought, this rule seems unsatisfactory for its vagueness, sounding, as it does, like a barren and empty formula. It should be remembered, however, that any principle like this, when stated in language, can be little more than an abstract proposition of fact, expressing only what is common to all those special rules of feeling and conduct which the practical discernment of men has reached by induction in the centuries of human experience, aided, it may be, by a higher guidance. These rules, the comprehensive, unwritten codes of manners and morals that are found everywhere among civilized and savage men, so far as they are correct, have been formed from such interpretations of the intentions of nature, as indicated in man's individual and social economy, and confirmed by the practical workings of human life.

That we are shut up to these sources of knowledge, is still further evident from the fact that no other is open to us. No absolute general rule has ever been actually recognized which of itself can settle every conflict between two natural affections, — as between love to father or mother, to benefactor or relative, to friend or foe, to an acquaintance or stranger, — or require us invariably to prefer the one to the other, either in outward act or inward feeling. No inward impression or divine instinct can preserve us from error, or guide us infallibly to the indulgence of the one and the suppression of the other impulse, when any two come in conflict. Even had we an explicit rule which should provide for all the complex relationships of these intertwined and conflicting impulses, we should need unerring inspiration to determine under which clause of the rule or exception each individual case would fall.

No absolute
general rule
can be laid
down.

§ 250. Before, however, we decide whether the law of love, as interpreted by these special relationships, is our only rule, it may be well to inquire what this law in fact requires in the

regulation or indulgence of our special preferences and antipathies. It is important to notice that the law which bids us love our neighbor as ourselves does not require us to have or cherish the same emotion or affection towards every individual of the human family. As it is impossible that we should perform towards all men the same actions, similarly it is impossible that we should feel alike towards all; and therefore the law of duty does not require this of us. The special affections which unite us so closely to some, that they become a part of our emotional life, are in nature unlike to that common sympathy which makes love to man as man a general and comprehensive duty. Were this law perfectly fulfilled, it would not (because it could not) evoke the same personal interest towards every individual of the human race. The great Exemplar of disinterested love to the human family had his own special circle of friends whom he loved with special affection, and among these was one whom he loved more than all the rest. The brief record concerning the disciple "whom Jesus loved" should go far to settle many of the difficult questions of casuistry that have disturbed the consciences of many of his disinterested and earnest followers.

Moreover, the law which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves does not require us to *like* each one of our neighbors equally well, or necessarily to repress our sympathy for those who are congenial or our antipathy for those who are distasteful. It does not bid us have the same emotions towards the trusted friend of a lifetime as towards the stranger of an hour's acquaintance. It does not command us to feel or act with respect to a generous benefactor, as we do with respect to one who has shown us no kindness, or perhaps has returned our kindness with gross ingratitude. When it commands us to love our enemies, it does not bid us repress the natural antagonism which makes their society or presence disagreeable, but only

The law of love does not require us to have the same feelings towards all.

We cannot like each of our neighbors equally.

to love them morally as men. Whatever modifying or adjusting force this moral love may subsequently exert upon our sympathies or antipathies, upon our likings or unlikings, may be safely left to itself. *The law of liking*, which is founded in human nature, was never intended to dishonor that nature, or to violate and shock its individual affinities or preferences. *The moral law of loving* can not and does not supersede or extinguish the natural law of liking which brings individuals together and holds them apart.

§ 251. The well-being of man, moreover, is promoted by cherishing and obeying many of the limited and special affections. Whether we consider the happiness which comes from the affections themselves as subjective experiences, or the actions which they prompt, there can be no doubt that the sum of human well-being is immensely augmented by the limitation of their special activities to narrow channels, and the consequent augmentation of the strength and sensitiveness of the special emotions themselves. It follows, not only that the law of general benevolence allows, but that it sanctions and enforces, respect to the personal affections of friendship and gratitude, and even exalts to the very highest place the duties to which these impel.

The indulgence of special affections is salutary.

The duties which are thus sanctioned, whether they concern the feelings or the conduct, are enforced as special inferences or applications from the comprehensive law of love to man as man. These inferences are largely left to the individual judgment, and cannot be formulated as axioms or even as positive and general principles. No absolute and unchanging precepts can be laid down in respect to every case which may arise, nor even in regard to the relative place of these relationships and affections in general as measured with one another. All that ethical science can accomplish is to justify and enjoin duties of this class as among the most important of human obligations, and to do justice to the reasons which enforce them. The only comprehensive rule for their regulation is furnished by

the formula which bids us to seek the highest good of all men, leaving the adjustment of the natural and personal sympathies and antipathies to special cases as they arise.

§ 252. If the moral affection of love be supreme, the special personal affections will take their appropriate places, and assume their relative and rightful strength. It is most important to observe, moreover, that this affection or controlling purpose is exercised and disciplined, is strengthened or weakened, is tried and proved, continually, in the special forms of our love to acquaintances and benefactors, to friends and enemies. The love to man which we exercise is love to some particular man, — to father or mother, to husband or wife, to child or benefactor, to friend or neighbor. It is through the control which we exercise over these affections, and the energy we impart to them, that the moral discipline of love to man as man is maintained and perfected, and the character and habits become better or worse. While the comprehensive and abstract formula of duty from man to man is the duty of voluntary love, the application of this rule to the special affections involves their energetic or their vigorous repression in due proportion to one another. They all have their foundation and place in the nature of man. Each one of them has its function in the social economy. They are all necessary and useful for man's development and progress. The temptations to failure and weakness are constant in every one of these relations. The natural rudiments of human affections, both sympathetic and repellent, are constantly liable to excess and defect in their relative proportion, and to misplacement in respect to the objects which excite them, and on which they rest. Men love their friends and benefactors too much or too little absolutely or relatively. Their friendships and antipathies, their gratitudes or their resentments, are either too strong, or disproportioned to one another.

It follows that special rules or maxims, founded on individual or general experience, may aid us in the application of these

general principles. They concern the objects of these special affections, and the relative energy or proportion with which the feelings should be indulged or obeyed. These special rules are simply inductions derived from the interpretation of human nature and from the lessons of human experience. They vary greatly in their import, and their application to particular cases. Primarily they are rules for the affections or feelings; secondarily and necessarily they extend to the actions, both those which express the feelings and those which re-act upon them. They are consequently rules for the inner culture as truly as for the outer life. They are classed as *duties which respect sympathy and antipathy, duties which originate from favors bestowed or injuries received, duties which grow out of associations of intimacy and confidence, duties to acknowledged friends and recognized enemies.*

Special rules
founded on
general
inductions.

§ 253. *The first class spring from our sympathies and antipathies.* We may indulge and obey our personal likings and dislikings, our sympathies and antipathies, our gratitude and our resentment, so far as they do not lead us to wrong our fellow-man whom we do not fancy, of any good which we might do him; or harm the one whom we like, by excess of affection; or wrong ourselves by lack of control over blind and unreasoning emotion. We have already seen that we cannot, if we would, be neighbors to every one of our fellow-men; and that it is for our convenience, as well as for that of our fellows, that we should limit our affections and acts to a few, naturally to those nearest to us. For similar reasons, though more emphatically, we are not only permitted, but commanded, to bestow our strongest and most frequent sympathies and acts of blessing upon those with whom we sympathize most fully and intensely. That we may and should regulate these sympathies, is obvious; but, this being conceded, the rule remains, and the reasons for it are plain. If I can effectively feel and act for only three hundred of my fellow-men, owing to

Duties which
respect the
sympathies.

the limitations of human force and opportunity, and can do this more effectively for the three hundred to whom I am especially drawn by favoring sympathy, then I may and ought to limit myself to these. If there are many, or few, whom I naturally dislike, who waken in me a positive antipathy, and to contribute to whose good I am impelled by no special reason of ability, or knowledge of impending necessity or certain suffering from others, and if I expend the entire force of my love upon those to whom I am thus drawn by natural and special sympathy, *I do it rightly*. For a similar reason I may cherish my likings if they are natural, and yield to my mislikings if they are genuine and unforced, because a concentrated interest in a few individuals is made necessary by the limitations of my nature, and because it is at once the most potent incitement to self-sacrificing and disinterested affection, and trains the man to more tenacious and constant habits of benevolent feeling and action. Such a rule of feeling and of life enhances and enlarges immensely the range of individual and social enjoyment, and gives to man his noblest discipline for a perfected charity and a higher than human love.

The *antipathies*, also, with which we are concerned, are those instinctive and necessary repulsions which are naturally evoked by contact with those of our fellow-men whose nature is, in many respects, unlike our own. These antagonistic or uncongenial feelings are supposed by us to be purely natural, and in no sense voluntary or morally reprehensible. The original fact cannot be denied, that we are impelled towards all men by the sympathies which are common to us as men. But we are also repelled from many by the feelings which our antipathic personality awakens. That such antipathies may be perverted to selfishness and malice and cruelty, is obvious. But that they exist, and cannot be violently repressed, will not be denied. All that we need to provide is positively that we love all our fellow-beings as men, even when we dislike them as uncongenial to ourselves. If our

The antipa-
thies should
be regarded,
but con-
trolled.

dislikes lead us into prejudices, or hostility, or any form of voluntary hatred which overrides the law of duty, there is a moral perversion by an act or habit of will; and this is always morally wrong, whether it manifests itself as excessive fondness for one man, or excessive dislike for another.

§ 254. These principles which respect the natural sympathies or antipathies also apply to our duties of *gratitude* and *resentment*. These emotions are always responsive to, and excited by, the good and evil which is intended or imparted to ourselves by others. In the old English usage, the generic term *resentment* was employed to designate this feeling in both its forms, including gratitude for good as truly as anger for evil. In later usage, "resentment" has been limited to the specific feeling of anger in its various forms, from the feeblest to the strongest. The existence of gratitude as a spontaneous re-action with respect to good intended or imparted is invariably recognized as natural to man. Its beneficence and loveliness are as universally apprehended. Its perversions and consequent mischiefs are more slowly noticed and assented to, though not entirely overlooked. That gratitude may be fond and selfish and narrowing, is not so readily owned. Ingratitude involves insensibility to the value of a benefit bestowed, or the reality of the kindness of the giver; and, whether it take the form of insensibility or distrust, it is rightly esteemed as one of the basest forms of selfishness. None but a definitely and positively selfish will can be capable of this offence, for the reason that an unselfish will cannot withhold its natural and vigorous responses to kindness of act and friendliness of feeling from another. Nothing but a selfish pre-occupation with one's own interests, or insensibility to generous emotion of every kind, can explain the failure to exercise this, the most spontaneous and the most natural of the loving emotions. The severity of the terms *an ingrate*, or *an ungrateful dog*, expresses the natural feelings and judgments of men with respect to this unnatural and odious form of the selfish will.

Duties of
gratitude and
resentment.

That gratitude is at once the most spontaneous and the most natural of the emotions, appears from the circumstance that it is indulged by multitudes who lay claim to no specially high standard of duty, and, indeed, who indulge almost every selfish passion, but yet are not insensible to the claims which the reception of favors and of love from their fellow-men imposes.

§ 255. *Resentment for evil*, on the other hand, is with greater difficulty and rareness acknowledged to be morally useful and good. It is often excessive and intense; and its consequences are often most disastrous to the objects upon which it expends its fury, and the subject whom it unmans and distorts by the unnatural heat of ungoverned passion. The provision in human nature for resentment or retaliation, is not always seen to be necessary, much less to be beneficent. To vindicate and explain this tendency, Bishop Butler has distinguished between *sudden* and *deliberate resentment* (Sermons 8, 9); the first of which he defends as an impulse which is more rapid than consciousness, and which forestalls all deliberation. The design of this provision, in his view, is to repel those sudden and rapid onsets of evil against which we cannot protect ourselves by timely notice or cool precautions. Deliberate resentment, on the other hand, is that which results from reflection and voluntary consent, and is called forth by intended injury. Butler's logic would defend and explain sudden resentment as a necessary provision against sudden exigencies; while it makes deliberate resentment always necessary, and therefore indispensable, against deliberate intention to harm; forethought and calculation being always supposed to be at hand, to dispense with any vicious impulse to harm or injure others, and any thing like hostile feeling towards them. The question why one man should ever be impelled to a passionate impulse of hostility towards another is not raised by him: certainly it is not answered.

It would seem that the natural explanation of the hostile

or resentful affection in man is to be found in the necessities of his condition as exposed to evil, both natural and moral, from a great variety of sources, irrational, animal, personal, and as summoned to defend himself against them all. If by his sensitive nature he revolts against suffering of every kind, he must also revolt and re-act against the originator of suffering, whether it be rational or irrational, whether it be personal or impersonal. A painful blow inevitably arouses an antagonistic feeling, and he is impelled to repel the stroke. An angry assault upon his person or his life calls forth the excited and impulsive opposition of displeasure, — innocent and natural anger we may call it, — which is as sudden and uncontrollable as the sudden act of shaking off a scorpion or serpent when he stings or bites us. Similarly, the knowledge that a person deliberately plots evil against our life, falsely maligns our character or purposes, or destroys our peace, awakens a natural and innocent antagonism. In one word, evil is an incident of man's condition so abundant, so manifold, so unexpected, that man needs to be aroused quickly, and sustained emphatically, in his efforts to repel it. Hence natural resentment, as a constitutional endowment, is properly conceived as the *defensive affection or impulse*. As voluntarily allowed, it is useful and necessary when it impels a sensitive man to inflict suffering in self-assertion or self-defence, to inflict it without hesitation and with a will (as we say) upon any treacherous or malignant foe; nerving him to the effort required, and inspiring him with the sacred rage of personal indignation, till his painful but needed work of protection, deliverance, or defence is accomplished. This furnishes the personal and emotional element to the sense of justice in all its forms. It animates a community with virtuous abhorrence of evil, and enables it to punish crime with the energy and fire which crime naturally evokes against itself as an enemy of individual welfare and the public peace.

**Resentment
founded on
a natural
impulse.**

§ 256. When this natural resentment is perverted by a selfish

will, and especially when it is the outcome of long-cherished habits of selfish indulgence, it acquires a fearful preponderance over all counteracting and opposing emotions. The natural capacity for hostile feelings increases by repetition, at a geometrical ratio. The imagination invests the hated object with exaggerated hideousness; while the habit of quick and sensitive irascibility follows anger if frequently indulged, especially if the temperament be hot and fiery. The sense of having betrayed the weakness of passion to one's self or others compels to self-justification. Anger at one's self provokes, by a necessary law, anger at others. The self-controlling will gives place to ungrounded *passion*, which justifies by its weakness the appellation which it bears. The whole store of motley habiliments and hideous disguises which anger wears, and which wilful resentment puts on, only serves to illustrate the truth, that, useful and necessary as the capacity for resentment at times may be, there is no impulse of our nature that needs such prompt and decided control, because there is none which does such unmeasured harm to those whom it impels to malignant feeling, or those who are the unhappy objects of its unreasonable and passionate rage. These higher stages of unreasonable temper are rightly called *malignant*; the term implying that they are producers of unmitigated evil, without excuse or palliation. Nature holds up her warning against such a temper, in the raging cruelty of those remorseless beasts of prey whom she has made offensive to the human race, not only by the rational knowledge that they are dangerous, but by the terror of their very aspect, and the manifold signs by which they warn reasoning and self-controlling man not to be like themselves.

§ 257. One of the most offensive of the forms which malignant resentment assumes is that of *an unforgiving temper*, — an impulse to hate and punish after the occasion for hatred has ceased, and the injury which had provoked our anger has been withdrawn and acknowledged. Whatever the

Resentment
not easily
regulated.

An unforgiv-
ing temper.

exigencies of legal or social retribution may require in suffering to the offender, after he has abandoned and confessed his offence, it is clear that moral love, or benevolence, when controlled by a conscientious will, requires that resentment provoked by hatred or injury should cease the moment its existing occasion ceases to exist. Any continuance of it longer cannot be justified by any consideration, in the light of that love which is the fulfilling of the moral law. The charity which thinketh no evil, which is the bond of perfectness, which “seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked,” is exactly the opposite of the resentful temper which is slow to forgive, or which when it forgives declares that it will not and can not forget. The ancient morality, in its best and sweetest forms, reached the height of a dignified self-control over the passions of revenge; it attained to commiserating pity for the malice of one’s enemies, and to sad regretfulness for their weakness: but the loving forgiveness that can pray for their forgiveness by God, in the very agony of suffering from their malignant hostility, is inspired by an example which, though human in its capacity for keenness of suffering, seems superhuman in its capacity to bear and to overcome. He who became human, that he might know how keen the anguish is for the innocent to suffer malignant hatred in return for love, showed that he was more than human in the overcoming forgiveness that could pray for his murderers.

§ 258. When congeniality and kindness exist, and circumstances favor, *friendships* arise. The circumstances which condition personal friendship, and give rise to its special duties, are manifold. Prominent among them is the opportunity for intimate acquaintance, often under circumstances specially favorable for emotional impression and sympathy, such as bring to the parties an intimate knowledge of the inner motives, tastes, and principles. Openness of temper, the disposition to receive and to give, confidence in each other’s truth, steadiness and loyalty of temper, and a high standard of honor and duty, — these are essentials

**Friendship
as a moral
duty.**

to friendship in its noblest and most permanent types. But whatever may be the types of friendship, or whatever may be the natural impulses on which it rests, it cannot be doubted that when formed it imposes especial moral obligations, and that these obligations are of the most sacred character. These obligations exalt friendship into a duty and a virtue, and sanction its moral aims when the relation is thus ennobled. The opinion that the law of universal love is incompatible with the impulse to special attachments, and especially to those of the intenser sort, or that the obligations to concentrated and ardent affection are of inferior sacredness and authority, cannot be maintained for an instant.

Special friendships not incompatible with the law of love.

It has been contended by not a few hostile critics and timid friends of the Christian morality, that it fails to recognize and to enforce any obligation to special friendship and impliedly would exclude and condemn it. Such critics fail to discern that it recognizes other exclusive relations, as of husband and wife, in the most positive and energetic tone, and that this relation implies and sanctions a friendship of the most sacred and endearing character; and, moreover, that there was no practical occasion for its original teachings to give special prominence to duties between friends or duties to country. It is enough to remove all difficulties, and answer all objections, to be sure that in principle and by implication Christianity provides for, sanctions, and enforces other special affections, even if it did not give us an illustration, as also a moving and sufficient example, in the love of Jesus for John.

Mistaken views of the Christian teachings.

§ 259. Friendship is of the nature of a contract,—a contract none the less real because it is not formal, none the less sacred because its assurances are not definitely phrased, and the conditions of its fulfilment are not precisely defined. Its importance and sacredness spring from the element of mutual reliance for help and sympathy in

Friendship a sacred contract.

every occasion and variety of need which life may bring. Two or more friends cannot pledge good like this, except they know each other intimately and care for each other intensely, and can rely confidently on the continuance of their present disposition. When these conditions are present, and the assurances are mutually given, the contract becomes a promise of the most sacred character, for the reason that all the motives to its fulfilment are fitted to inspire and hold to fidelity. Whatever inner or outer motives combined may urge to fidelity are here conjoined, and urge to faithfulness. A man who is lightly false to his friend will be false to his race, to himself, and to his God. Such a man not only breaks the special law which should hold him to his friend, but he breaks the comprehensive law of moral love which holds him to duty of every sort and to all other beings.

Friendship is often, and always tends to be, romantic. There is a strong inclination on the part of an **Friendship** ardent friend to clothe his friend with attractions **romantic.** which he borrows, more or less freely it may be, from his own imagination, and hardly cares whether the friend does or does not deserve to wear them. All the affections draw largely upon the imagination, and the imagination is easily stimulated to respond to their demands. To invest our friend with excellences which he does not possess, at least not in the pure and unalloyed forms and in the same perfection which we fondly dream of, is often an easy task, especially if we therein flatter ourselves with the self-complacent thought that one so excellent and lovely bestows upon ourselves a special regard.

§ 260. When friendship exists between man and woman, the contrast between the two natures as they supplement one another adds strength to its special emotions and gives to its experiences a peculiar charm. **Friendship** **between man** **and woman.** If there may be special hazard in such friendships under many circumstances, they are certain to exist under the intimacies and experiences of modern life, especially when men and women

share, so largely as they must, in common pursuits and common occupations and interests.

§ 261. Friendship between man and woman becomes what is technically called love when it contemplates the intimacy and affection which look towards marriage.

Love. What is true of friendship in its intensest forms is true of love in its most eminent and emphatic meaning. It is liable to be passionate in more than one sense. It appeals to the affectional and sensuous imagination, and therefore is most energetic, and consequently needs the most energetic regulative force from the conscience. Love in its highest and noblest form is never reached except by those whose vows of fidelity are enforced by the sense of duty, and in whom the fulfilment of the vows thus begun is maintained by the constantly acknowledged and constantly repeated control and elevation of the affections by the conscience. Of love in this its highest and most Christianized form, the memorable lines of Coleridge are true, even in a higher and a more varied sense than he intended:—

“ All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.”

§ 262. It is worth while to notice that love for woman among the ancients, whether outside of marriage or within its limits, differed strikingly from the same affection among the moderns. Their romance of love seems to have been transferred to friendship, — certainly among the cultured classes, of whom alone literature gives any report; and for the reason that women, with rare exceptions, failed to be educated to a capacity to share in the thoughts and feelings and employments of men. Friendship, consequently, was limited to men, and among the choicer souls seems to have been invested with all the noblest aspirations and associations that humanity ever conceived or idealized. With a few exceptions, the two

Friendship among the ancients.

sexes lived in a different world of thought and feeling, and met only in their susceptibility to sensuous charms and enjoyments, and occasionally to those æsthetic attractions which culture and art presented to the antique taste. There are some indications of a return to these ethnic types of friendship, among both sexes, in those circles in Christendom in which Pagan ideas of life and duty are affected.

Christianity has raised woman in some sense to, or towards, a community of thought and feeling with man in science, letters, and art, and without question, so far as they share in the same ethical and religious emotions. The unselfishness of Christianity cherishes the amiable impulses, the lively sympathy, the refined tastes, and the natural grace, that are pre-eminently feminine; while the Christian ideal softens and purifies the feelings of those whom it either wins or reproves. The nations of the Teutonic stock invested woman with a certain superiority that was thought to be divine. Christianity hallowed chivalry by associations that were peculiarly its own, and homage to woman became the duty and the blessing of modern times. So soon as woman began to occupy the rightful place in the affections which was enforced and justified by its new ethical standard, a new set of obligations followed, the unwritten code of which sustains and purifies while it stimulates and controls the passion of love.

CHAPTER XIII.

DUTIES TO FAMILY AND KINDRED.

§ 263. THE relations which arise from natural birth and community of descent, with the affections which they inspire, are common to the whole race. Every human being is born of a human mother, and connected by ties of kindred with at least one human being. These ties and affections are often numerous, complex, and controlling. They are all concerned with that natural and necessary social organism which we call the family; which, again, is protected and regulated by the State, and hallowed and sanctioned by the Church; both of which organizations, in their turn, are comprehensive and permanent, and equally necessary with the family to man's well-being. The affections which the family originates and sustains are also among the most intense and controlling which human nature knows. The friendships which these affections originate and ripen, and the interests which they inshrine and defend, are among the most sacred of which human nature is capable. Hence the duties which they impose are recognized as the most sacred and binding which human nature knows.

Each of these relationships is attended by, and stimulates, special and peculiar affections; and these affections impel to certain duties. The affections in some cases impel to and originate these relationships, and in some cases are created and strengthened by them: as when love precedes and occasions marriage, and afterwards takes the form of conjugal affection; and as parental and

Family
relations
common
to all men.

Impel to
common
affections
and duties.

filial love follow the birth of children, under the operation of parental care, and the experience of its benefits and blessings. These affections are not blind and unintelligent instincts, though their growth and gathered strength are largely owing to the unconscious workings of association in the most susceptible periods of life. They are the product of knowledge in the largest sense of the word, i.e., of the experience of benefits and expectations, of asking and receiving, of longing and gratification, on the part of one person with respect to another. We cannot trace by personal consciousness, nor revive in actual memory, nor interpret by the observation of infant-life, many of the processes by which the infant learns to look to its nurse or its mother for the supply of its wants, and grows into confidence and gratitude by means of its manifold experiences of help and of affection.

These affections and duties intelligent and moral.

We only know that when the capacity for moral reflection is awakened to the knowledge of moral relations, by the conflicting claims of these impulses with private interests or passions, that then the sense of duty to parent or brother or sister springs into life, which arises from the superior claims of one or all. In its first beginnings, doubtless, this moral love concerns itself with the external actions, and the feelings which impel to them. Subsequently it respects the feelings themselves, and the processes and habits by which they are formed and fixed, till all the refined and complex emotions and actions which concern the family life are recognized as matters of moral obligation.

§ 264. The duties to family and kindred are enforced and directed by the following considerations:—

Grounds of these duties.

(1) These duties, in the double form of feeling and action, are the natural and inevitable consequences and expressions of a character controlled by the law of duty. Bring an unselfish man to the experience and knowledge of these relationships, and he cannot but respond to them in the exercise of every emotion and action which nature seems to dictate. Whether addressed as husband, or wife, or

(1) *Natural to good men.*

parent, or child, he will promptly respond to the demand made upon his sensibility, as being alike natural and moral, — moral because natural, both being blended into one. Only a selfish will can prevent these affections and acts from taking their controlling place within the sensibility, and being acted out in befitting words and deeds. Nothing but some opposing desire or impulse can prevent the definite recognition of the right and wrong of such affections and acts in general. When the rational conscience and natural affection thus coincide, we cannot be misled. In such a case, the question, “Doth not nature itself teach you?” is recognized as expressing the united voice of affection and conviction. It is equally obvious, that, other things being equal, in case of a competition of the claims to our affection or active service between our kindred and other “neighbors,” our kindred should be preferred. This rule should by no means be confounded with that which regards our kindred as selfishly identified with ourselves in mutual dependence or community of interest, reputation, or social position. While it is natural and reasonable that this kind of family feeling and relationship should prevail in deciding many questions of benevolence and courtesy, it does not follow that our kindred should always claim our first attention. All that is required by the rule is this: that, when the claims of the two are equal, our kindred should have the precedence. This follows from the unquestioned fact, that a person controlled by an unselfish purpose under the training of family life would be impelled to prefer his kindred in affection and act. The inevitable and natural impulses of a virtuous will may be assumed to be *ipso facto* an act of duty.

Selfish and degenerate family feeling.	The so-called legitimate love of family may indeed be mistaken for, and degenerate into, a narrow and unscrupulous selfishness, which is the more insinuating because it is disguised under the form of interest and sacrifice for others. Family pride, family quarrels, family combinations and intrigues, nepotism, and favoritism, have been abundant and powerful in their influence for evil, by enlisting in their service the selfish passions of men,
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and have sometimes acted with irresistible and damaging force in social life, in politics, trade, and religion. As it is our duty to love our neighbor, i.e., — our fellow-man, — as a moral being, or as a member of a moral community, so it is our duty to recognize our family and kindred as members of the greater family of mankind, and subject, as such, to the law of universal brotherhood; but always under moral control as supreme.

§ 265. (2) Not only does nature teach and impel to these duties, clearly and directly, but reflection and experience confirm and enforce these teachings. The members of our family are our nearest neighbors, and for that reason impose on us the foremost claims to love and assistance. Parents, brothers, and sisters are always, as it were, within our reach, and constantly at our hand, or often present to our thoughts when farthest removed in place, to ask and receive, to give and take, to love and be loved, to suffer and be comforted. Their wants and weaknesses are known to us more perfectly than those of any other human beings. They solicit and excite our sympathy more readily than any others. They receive our tenderness more confidently and gratefully than the sympathy of any others. We can aid them more effectively than those who know them less perfectly; and they naturally prefer to receive aid from us, except under circumstances that are exceptional and against nature.

(2) Sanctioned by reason and conscience.

So far as the family affections prevail and are cherished, whether in the form of natural or moral emotions, they furnish experiences and opportunities of personal gratitude and friendship which are unique and peculiar. Even when they are very imperfect in their fruits and realizations, they are easily recognized as of the greatest value, and as consequently clothed with the highest moral authority. Every human being acknowledges the sacredness of the obligation to secure and confirm for himself the friends in his own household, which he may find and make for himself, by faithfully and affectionately discharging the constant and often

Family friendships peculiar.

trivial duties which grow out of these friendships, and which are essential to their continuance and their sacredness.

If we recognize special inclinations and obligations to contract special friendships of any kind, if we make these friendships sacred and permanent by giving and receiving affection and benefits, obligations of this kind apply with pre-eminent authority to the friends which we find and may secure for ourselves within the circle of our family and kindred. The value of limited spheres and special sources of special affections is obvious from human nature and human experience. A benevolence that in feeling or in act is diffused over too wide a sphere is like a river which is wasted in the sands, compared with one which is compressed within a deep and narrow channel. These possibilities become more and more clear as the mind is taught by reflection and experience. As social opportunities and advantages are more and more clearly understood in the experiences of human life, the more and more clear does it become to the honest mind, that the experiences and relationships and opportunities of the family, as opportunities for intimate and sacred friendships, are ordinarily unequalled by any other. Such friendships are indeed often more severely tried, not so often by violent wrenches and strains as by petty tensions and irritations. The fickle and the headstrong, the impatient and the testy, the romantic and the unreflecting, may often be weary of the monotony of household love and the constant and wearing exactions of household duties; but those who are unfaithful to these primal obligations usually weary of all others, and those who turn their backs upon household friends are usually incapable of lasting friendships of any kind. The indifferent and traitorous to their relatives are usually cold and hard and treacherous towards human kind. The members of the same family know one another better than other parties can do except after a long acquaintance. It might be objected, indeed, that for this reason they know each other's faults and foibles more completely, and that knowledge of this sort is fatal to

the warmest and most faithful friendships. That this intimate knowledge often strains, and sometimes weakens, the bonds of custom and nature, is true; but it also furnishes arguments for patience and forbearance and all the higher qualities of moral friendship, in which self-control and forbearance and forgiveness and magnanimity are conspicuous.

§ 266. (3) Some of the family relationships may properly be made the subject of sacred and permanent contracts. These contracts may respect the affections as properly as the actions. Certain special affinities may be assumed and required as the essential conditions of entering into and fulfilling them. The affections cannot, indeed, be created or evoked by a vow or a compact; but, when they exist, they can be regulated and stimulated by the will, and for this reason can be retained and strengthened by fixed purposes and solemn pledges. The family naturally begins with a promise of the continuance of that special and exclusive affection which is supposed to exist as its pre-condition. Such pledges are the essential element of betrothal and marriage, and give meaning to their ceremonials, among all those communities which attach special significance to duties of any kind. Fidelity to the marriage-vow includes and implies fidelity in conjugal affection. What is true in the most eminent degree of this relation may and should be true of all the life-long and life-strong alliances which unite many near relatives in reciprocal love and fidelity. If the marriage-vows should be sacredly regarded as the essential condition of the family life, the implied but unspoken contracts which hold the several members of a family in mutual confidence should be as conscientiously and carefully kept. The sacred fire which hallows the domestic hearth should be carefully guarded against any and every noxious vapor that may damp its pure and glowing flame. Trifling occasions of discord and strife should be watched against with sedulous attention. Family quarrels should be carefully shunned and avoided, at almost any cost, as demoralizing curses, worse

(3) Some of
them subject
to special
contracts.

than a blighting pestilence ; while family peace and harmony should be maintained at every sacrifice except of duty or honor.

The doctrine of free love and elective affinities. In modern times, and to some extent among circles which call themselves cultivated, the doctrine of free love or elective affinities has been taught as the rule of family affection in various forms, more or less plausible or offensive, more or less gross or refined. This doctrine subjects the affections and obligations of husband and wife, and consequently of parent and child, to the uncertain and capricious changes of uncontrolled and irresponsible emotion. These theories have the following features in common: They fail to recognize the fundamental truth, that love is little more than an animal passion, except as it is energized and controlled by the personal will under the sanction of duty, and is perpetuated by a continued and unbroken vow, such as underlies the character and should control the man in every form of voluntary and reasonable activity. The family as such is an institution of nature, which of itself elevates the special obligations of duty above the impulses of sensuous or emotional excitement, and oftentimes exalts serious sacrifices of feeling and of act into moral discipline and culture for all its members.

Relation of sympathy to duty. The feelings are largely under our control, and can and should be made the subject of voluntary discipline. While it is true that feeling or emotion to a large extent determines special questions of duty, even between friends who are united the most closely, it never should be exalted as a supreme arbiter, least of all in relations with which the weakness and burdens of females and the helplessness of children are concerned. It would seem, that, in some of these cases, the appeal to the sympathies to enforce duty was the strongest conceivable, and that feeling of itself would impel to duties which excited passion, and what is misnamed resistless love, cruelly disown when either becomes the controller of the affections or the actions. The man who, in theory or practice, makes inclination or passion his supreme law in respect to any one of the relations of kindred, does by the very fact abandon allegiance to conscience as the law of his life. The position is at first view plausible, that, when affection and sympathy cease, the duties appropriate to the family relationships can no longer be performed, and consequently that all obligations cease. What gives plausibility to this doctrine is the truth that these affections are in some form themselves obligatory. But the inference which is derived from this truth, that, when these affections are wronged, all duties cease, is a transparent sophism. In a multitude of cases, even when the object of these affections is unworthy of them, or fails to respond to them, the duties of service and kindness still remain. Now and then it may be that the bond itself may be lawfully disowned, and all present obligations of love or duty may be cancelled. Whether

all the obligations which arise from family ties can ever finally cease, is a question which puzzles the most scrupulous as well as the most enlightened casuists.

§ 267. The family is of necessity an organized community, involving the right and duty to *govern* on the one hand, and the obligation to *obedience* on the other. Nature indicates, and experience confirms the truth, that the husband and father is endowed with moral authority, and that the wife and children and other relatives and dependents are bound to obedience. The obligation arises from the obvious necessity of united and consenting action, in order to the attainment of those ends which are essential to the sustentation and well-being of every permanently organized community. It is not always enough, that affection impels to harmonious and efficient action, or that gratitude and confidence add force to these impulses. Counter impulses, which are manifold and strong, are certain, in human experience, to interfere with harmonious and efficient action. These must be set aside or overcome by some decisive and prevailing word. As human beings find themselves in varying degrees of knowledge, and are more or less immature in habits and imperfect in character, they need the control of persons invested with authority to direct and command them; and nature has designated the individuals who are thus invested by means of the relationships of kindred.

The family implies authority and obedience.

§ 268. In other words, there must be authority in some one to utter the final word, and obligation to obey and enforce this word. Nature has distinctly indicated who should use this authority, and may therefore rightly claim obedience. The persons indicated may, indeed, not always be the most competent. The judgment of the husband or father may be inferior to that of wife or children; but similar failures are incident to all human organizations, and often must be accepted, because to substitute another lawmaker or ruler, except for decisive reasons, would introduce perpetual

Anticipates and supposes the state.

strife and discord. In extreme cases, other expedients are resorted to, in order to remedy the defective rule of the family lawgiver. If the family is the only recognized government, as it is under a patriarchal constitution, such a remedy is found within the family itself. If the family recognizes a higher authority, as it always does under the simplest civil organization, resort in the extremest necessity may be had to the civil magistrate to displace the tyrannical or incompetent husband or wife. The sphere of government in the family has differed greatly in different countries and at different times. The power of the parent over the child, and of the husband over the wife, has been exalted to the most absolute and irresponsible despotism, or limited to a very narrow and carefully guarded control; but this power has always been recognized as essential to the existence and welfare of the family on the one hand, and to the existence and well-being of the state itself on the other.

It is important to notice this fact, for the reason that it carries with it the truth, that man is not merely a moral being, and as such held to an ethical responsibility to himself; nor, again, that he is also social, and held to duties to his fellow-men, which again bring him under social responsibilities, and expose him to their favorable or unfavorable judgments: but, that he is by nature fitted for certain forms of organized society, and that organized society is invested with a moral authority, which his conscience requires him to recognize and obey.

An organized society for moral aims involves not merely the moral authority to command, with the contingency of virtuous obedience or criminal disobedience; but it involves the moral authority to enforce its commands by reward and punishment. Whether this authority is merely penal, — i.e., whether it expresses the complacency or displeasure of the ruler, — or whether it is also disciplinary, makes no difference, so long as such control is essential to government for moral ends, and is properly exercised in the family. The family can scarcely exist without it, least of all can it fulfil the

**Implies
reward and
punishment.**

most important purposes for which the family exists. The ignorance and immaturity of the child require instruction and training; and its moral immaturity tempts it to constant deviations from duty, against which authority, in the form of command, is the best security. In this the family anticipates the state; being in fact the state in miniature as feebly shadowed forth, and reflecting also the moral and spiritual dominion which the Father of spirits and Ruler of men exercises over his creatures.

With authority the parent and the husband are invested with certain special rights over the other members of the family, — the right to control and to exact obedience. These rights are not founded in the natural claim of property on the part of the parent in the child, but on the general necessity of control for the sake of order in the household.

§ 269. It is almost needless to observe, and yet it is most necessary to remember, that the family is itself the most important school of morals to any and every community. When its influences are exerted in harmonious operation and effect, the community is so far almost certain to maintain strong moral convictions, enlightened views of duty, and the practical control of the animal passions, with a more or less perfect exemplification of the charities of life. In proportion as the family affections are slighted, and its more sacred duties are dishonored, conscience itself is dishonored if not dethroned, and a low standard of ethical theory and practice prevails.

**Important
as a school
of morals.**

These general principles are the foundation and enforcement of the special duties which concern the family. The principles themselves are more or less obvious and axiomatic. The same may be true of the special inferences or applications which we derive from them. It is easy to formulate and accept these maxims of both classes, but not so easy to know when they apply, and with what varying degrees or relative force. This is no more than what is universally true of all principles of

practice when applied to individual cases. It does not follow, however, that for this reason either principles or rules are useless, or that they are not of the supremest importance in directing our conduct and inspiring our feelings. We consider these classes of duties in detail.

§ 270. (1) The duties which concern *the betrothal*. It has already been explained, that marriage is a contract or covenant of love and act, which is binding through life. This promise is naturally preceded by another which contemplates the future and final exchange of mutual vows. This preliminary contract, it is obvious, should be founded on mutual knowledge and cordial sympathy. The parties who pledge themselves to one another should know each other's tastes and principles, and resources of thought and action, and, above all, their practical views of the aims and conduct of life, before they venture to propose to live in the most intimate of human associations for possibly thirty or sixty years. Such knowledge may require but little time. It may come by the insight of a brief acquaintance, to persons who can sagaciously interpret character by a single sign or word, or it may be the slow and gradual growth of a protracted intimacy; but the knowledge should be gained, or the promise is rash, and may be almost or altogether immoral. In small and simple communities, such as consist of a few scores of families, such knowledge of the significant indications of character, or the more subtile signs of congeniality, is easily gained. In the larger and more complicated communities of modern civilization, the indications of character may be less easily interpreted, and, possibly, less cared for. Ethically speaking, they are required as the necessary prerequisites of a morally lawful matrimonial engagement, for the simple reason that marriage is not allowed in the court of conscience without assurance of such sympathy, either actual or attainable, as will make the life-long friendship a blessing to both parties. To enter upon marriage, or a promise of

**Special
duties: the
betrothal.**

**Primary
conditions.**

marriage, except with this preliminary knowledge, is unlawful, because it involves a risk of possible disappointment and unhappiness to one or both parties, and possibly to many others.

Other conditions are, the relative age of the parties, their habits and associations in life, their health present and prospective, their obligations of duty already Secondary. pledged to other persons, the consent and sympathy of relatives and friends, and a variety of other circumstances which are supposable. They are all material, for the reason, that, while a prospective marriage is of supreme importance to the parties themselves, it also involves more or fewer important consequences to other persons. Every human being is a member of the community, and can only live ethically as he respects and recognizes his relations to those of its members with whom he is brought into frequent association. It is well-nigh useless to ask the question whether one or both parties should refrain from a contract of marriage if the parents or other relatives withhold their favor or their consent, or how far the consent or prohibition of parents should be considered, or what should be the relative importance which should be attached to any single consideration: it is enough to know that all may be of importance; while none need always be decisive, always excepting the absence of that special sympathy or congeniality which is required for the assurance that the marriage will be followed by the fulfilment of the vows with which every marriage should begin.

§ 271. The question may be asked, whether the vows of a betrothal can ever be lawfully broken. We reply: May the
promise ever
be broken? When made, they are not understood to be beyond recall, and they ought not to be beyond recall. However positively they are uttered, if any obstacle to the fulfilment of the promise should be discovered or interposed, the promise should be annulled, however solemnly it may have been made. If the promise was irrevocably pledged, it should be regarded as an unlawful promise,—a promise such as the

parties had no right to make, the intent and meaning of a betrothal being a contingent contract. It does not follow from these facts, however, that the wanton and causeless breach of a promise of marriage may not be, and often is not, a recklessly and inexcusably criminal act, when judged of in the court of conscience.

The inquiry is often urged, whether the discovery of a want of that affection which the betrothal supposes, and the marriage-vow promises to give, justifies, in every case, the violation of such a promise. Our reply has already been anticipated, and, in theory, we can give no other: a promise to marry is a promise to promise, at some future time, to exercise that affection which, by the supposition, it is impossible should ever be felt. If it is impossible to fulfil such a vow, it is immoral to make it. Whether it will or would be impossible to fulfil it, provided the party concerned were to deal honestly with himself or herself, is altogether another question, upon the decision of which must turn the main question in the case.

It is, in some sense, usually understood to be, as it ought always to be in fact, a conditional promise, — a promise conditional upon the continuance of that affection which is presumed and declared to exist; but it is not in any sense absolute and irrevocable like the marriage-covenant.

The reason why the community visits a withdrawal from a promise of marriage so often with its condemning judgment is, that its members either believe that the promise originally made was not inspired by real affection and an honest purpose, or that some other motive leads to its violation. That the person who, in all honesty, withdraws from such engagement, owes every possible reparation and sacrifice to the person from whom he or she is parted, is most obvious; and that the fulfilment of such obligation is enforced by the sympathy of every moral community, is equally obvious.

If to break a promise of marriage is so serious an offence of itself, it is difficult to find language which can adequately ex-

press the criminality of seduction under the shelter of such a promise, and the subsequent desertion of its victim. Whether the crime of desertion is consented to after so fatal a crime, makes little difference. The man who commits it, under any circumstances, deserves the reprobation of his fellow-men, and is justly judged as guilty of the most selfish cruelty towards one who has been disappointed of his affections, his truth, and his honor.

§ 272. (2) *Marriage* constitutes two separate persons into one family. Ideally conceived, it is a permanent relation between two persons opposite in sex, which is effected by a covenant of continued duty and affection. This friendship, as we have seen, should be founded on intimate acquaintance and controlling sympathies. These sympathies usually arise from similarity of temperament and practical aims. Its friendships are often stronger, rather than weaker, by reason of opposite and contrasted characteristics; provided these supplement one another in a mutual dependence, and do not lead to positive antipathy. Physically conceived, marriage implies sexual union, which should be invariably elevated and purified by spiritual and personal affection. Fornication and adultery in marriage are justly regarded as especially degrading, and as a violation of the most sacred confidence and the most solemn vows. Hence they are visited by prompt and general social condemnation.

The social and moral importance of marriage is attested by the manifold ceremonies which attend its solemnization, and the religious rites by which it is supposed to be hallowed. These all attest the conviction among men, that the family takes the foremost place among human institutions; and the obligations which create and grow out of it are among the most sacred which can move the feelings and control the conduct of men. These obligations may be superficially interpreted, and very imperfectly fulfilled; but the human conscience almost universally regards the rudest and

Marriage, its nature.

Its social and moral importance.

roughest household as in some sense worthy of respect and homage, and every domestic hearth as in some sense a sacred altar.

Marriage is constituted by a covenant which is permanent.

The covenant. If the vows which originate and maintain it are to accomplish the best results, if, indeed, they are to be in fact fulfilled, they must include the pledge, "till death us do part." The responsibilities assumed, and the consequences incurred, to the parties and to the community, are so serious and so long-continued as to require a covenant which extends over the lifetime of one of the parties. No other covenant would satisfy that kind and degree of affection which marriage presupposes; and whatever ideal such affection proposes ought to be made a matter of promise. Whatever is promised should be fulfilled. The community also is so far interested in its results as to be justified in requiring that a promise of union for life should

Its permanent obligation. be made, and adhered to. If the affection which is promised is for any reason not maintained, many, if not all, of the other duties involved can be required, and ought to be, for the welfare of all the other parties who are more immediately affected by the marriage, and for the welfare of the community. The doctrine of free love, which teaches that the obligations of either married party are binding no longer than what is called mutual sympathy remains, anticipates and fosters those impulses which tend to a separation. It dethrones the will from its appropriate dominion over the feelings, and releases the emotions from their responsibility to the conscience. The stern lessons of responsibility to the law, for all the burdens which marriage involves, is also a wholesome and most necessary discipline to the duties of good citizenship and of personal responsibility in respect to a relationship which is so serious in its consequences to the husband, the wife, to helpless and perhaps sickly children, and to a larger or smaller circle of relatives and neighbors whose feelings and actions are seriously affected by the disruption of the marriages. All these consequences of marriage make it evident,

at least, that the question of the termination of the marriage-contract should never be left to the parties concerned. The community in particular and in general are too sensitively and seriously interested in its results, not to require that the weightiest reasons should be offered and sanctioned whenever divorce is allowed, and that such conditions should be imposed as to make every possible reparation to the injured party or parties, and also to express the sensibility of the suffering community.

§ 273. In the simplest states of society, where the family represents the state, or where woman is lost sight of as a person who is equal to man, the right of sundering the marriage-bond has often been exercised by the husband or the head of the patriarchal household. The wife in such a household is practically the slave of the husband, and marriage in the ethical sense of the relation can scarcely be said to exist. This right of "putting away the wife" doubtless existed among the customs of the Hebrew people when the Mosaic law was given, and was allowed to remain because of the "hardness of the hearts" of the people; in other words, because of their practical incapacity to receive and act upon a better theory of marriage, or more salutary restrictions upon the traditional right of divorce. The Law-giver for Christendom enacted no formal law upon the general subject of divorce, but simply announced that no reason for a separation was valid except sexual sin, and that such separation for any other reason involves the crime of adultery in both parties. He also referred to the earlier time, "the beginning," in which the union in marriage constituted the parties "one flesh," by divine intention and ordinance. To this original law, Moses suffered the exception referred to, because of the "hardness of the hearts" of the people. The directions of the Apostle Paul respect a possible separation of husband and wife, and a practical disruption of the family, in consequence of a

Divorce in
earlier
times.

The law of
Christ.

The teaching
of Paul.

difference of religious faith. They prescribe, "in the name of the Lord," that the wife should not depart from her husband; but that, if he should leave her, she should remain unmarried. The apostle further advises, in his own name, that, if either non-Christian party should separate or withdraw from the other, he should depart in peace, without resistance or complaint. Nothing is said or intimated as to whether, if the party thus deserted should desire to be married again, such marriage should be allowed. These teachings plainly provide for no dissolution of the marriage-covenant, except on grounds of what is called fornication, or its equivalent as a breach of the marriage-vow, if such an equivalent may be supposed.

In applying these principles to modern life, many contend that offences occur against the law of marriage which are equally criminal with sexual sin. They urge, for example, the offence of open and long-continued desertion, and of brutal neglect and cruelty; both of which, it is contended, imply such an open and deliberate repudiation of the other party as may be taken to be constructive adultery. Whatever view may be taken of this doctrine as a question for theological or ethical speculation, it is clear, that, for legislation and actual practice, a decree of final separation may be properly pronounced between two parties for the protection of the person and property of the one who is wronged, while the liberty of marrying again should be reserved only for the party which suffers from the grossest offence against the marriage-vow. The prohibition to re-marry, in every other case of separation, not only has the highest conceivable ethical sanction, but is plainly of permanent application and importance. Such a prohibition seems absolutely essential in order to secure to the marriage-relation the necessary sacredness and authority, and to guard against manifold impulses and temptations to trifle with its duties or its vows. A generation of human beings who enter upon the marriage-relation with the suspicion, even, that possibly they may have

**Application
to modern
life.**

occasion to break its bonds and recall their vows, must necessarily become degenerate in their views of all the duties of life, and be prepared to yield for trivial causes to the solicitations of any sort of temptation or provocation. The common sentiment of the community ought to enforce the obligations of the marriage-contract, as it values loving parents, obedient children, and happy homes. Without these, no community can be truly prosperous and free, whatever be its education, its culture, its science, its government, or its religious faith or zeal.

§ 274. (3) *Parents and children* are connected with each other by a physical relationship, the knowledge of which awakens strong and peculiar emotions. These indicate and impel to special duties. It is from its parents that the child receives its bodily life, sharing largely therewith their physical and psycho-physical capacities and tendencies, which constitute a psychical foundation for quick and responsive sympathies, and for a ready understanding and effective union in thought and feeling, in taste and temper. Hence the readiness with which parents and children can enter into joint activities, and the completeness with which they share one another's life, with the additional advantage that comes from the early period at which the processes of their blended life begin, and the completeness with which the life of the parents (pre-eminently of the mother) and children are given up to one another during the earliest years.

(3) The parental relation: natural basis for.

Not only does the child receive its life from its parents, but it is at once thrown upon parental care for the continuance and comfort of that life. The first appeal which it makes to the parent's heart is by its utter helplessness, — an appeal which if made to a stranger, by a waif or a foundling, would touch and move the feelings, but, when made to the mother, brings, with the food from her breasts, the love of adoption and welcome which is stronger than death. The mind which is able to discern a call and command of duty in any impulses and indications of nature cannot fail to interpret these experiences as the voice

of conscience and the will of God. As the child is developed into conscious life, its opening intelligence interests the most stolid, while the playful and insinuating ways of artless infancy wind about the heart of the partial parent a network of strong—none the less strong because most tender—ties. The utterances of the responsive affections are the voice of nature speaking within the soul: “Some one should care for these helpless dependents, and of all others I am called to do this duty.”

The earliest and foremost duty of the parent is to provide for the wants of the child. The simplest wants of infancy come first, as of food and clothing, defence from the elements and disease, from mental terror and irritation. As the powers are developed, and with them novel wants, these wants are successive calls of nature, to each of which the heart and conscience of the parent respond. These wants are not all bodily wants, nor does the most important training concern the physical man. As reason is expanded and matured, a new set of needs appear, and become more and more imperative,—the needs of stimulus and guidance to a more independent activity and complete self-reliance. The duty of the parent does not stop with the training of the powers to that general independence and self-reliance which qualify the child to act as a man; but they require such guidance as may train him to a special calling or profession by which he can gain for himself an independent livelihood, and render some definite service to his fellow-men. The impulses of affection and conscience make it the duty of every parent to give to each of his children a general and special education. Wealth, social position, entire independence of fortune, furnish no exception to this rule. Every child is certain to need such a training as a means of support or a condition of independence, or a resource in sorrow, or a qualification for greater influence and usefulness.

**Duty to
educate.**

The duty and responsibility of educating his children is imposed upon the parent by the economy of nature,

for the reason that no other person ought to feel so great an interest in imparting this benefit to those whom he loves so tenderly. The state in its organic capacity, and individual beneficence, may provide the appliances and the means of culture which the resources of individuals can or will not supply; but how far a child shall avail himself of these benefits must be left for the parent to decide. There is one exception to this rule. The state may compel the parent to train his children to that degree of culture which the community believes is necessary for its own well-being. So far as education or knowledge is, in the judgment of the community, seen to be necessary for its continued existence and prosperity, so far may the state compel the parent to educate his child, but no farther (§ 280). Beyond that limit the parent is the natural and responsible guardian of the interests of his child; and with his freedom no other person and no other organization may interfere.

The parent is morally bound to provide for his children until they are able with the best advantage to provide for themselves. When this limit is reached, can be de-
To provide
for children.
 terminated by no fixed rule or period of time. This limit will vary very greatly with the calling to which the child is destined, with the strength and health of the child, and with the disposition of both parent and child. The duty itself is taught by nature, and usually enforced by parental affection. If it is a duty to love one's children, it is a duty to provide for them till their own filial affection would suggest and impose the duty of becoming independent of parental help, and assuming to themselves the duty of self-support. The duty of helping their children to a respectable independence in the beginnings of a business or a professional life is suggested and enforced at once by parental affection, and a regard to family comfort and social position.

That parents ought to cherish and express their
To cherish
affection
for them.
 affection for their children, is obvious. In their
 earliest years, children thrive best in the sunlight of parental

tenderness and sympathy. They need and rejoice in this more than in any and in all things else. It is never superfluous to recognize and enforce parental affection as a duty ; inasmuch as, however strong it may be by nature, it constantly needs to be stimulated and directed by the conscience, in the light of the moral aims and moral destiny of the objects of the parents' love and pride. However greatly children are loved, with natural affection, they often try the patience, and disappoint the hopes, and wound the pride, and sometimes break the hearts, of those who have expended their care and wasted their wealth upon them. Parental love is often a foolish and fond affection, that fails to recognize and honor the claims of duty as supreme. Weak and indulgent emotion trains the child to be exacting, selfish, and ungrateful. Parental affection, for its tenderness and patience, and readiness to pardon, is rightly taken as the symbol of the divine goodness ; and yet it needs itself to be directed by the law of duty to God, and quickened and purified by faith in his guardianship.

Parents should also study and aim to secure the respect and confidence of their children till the end of their own lives. To this end, they should respect their developed activity and growing independence. To do this is not always easy ; and yet it is essential if parents would have their children, when adult, to mingle respect with their love, and the independence of equals with the recollected tenderness of infant confidence and gratitude. Perhaps no duty is more difficult, while none is more important, than the obligation to respect the self-relying and opening manhood of the growing boy, and sympathetically to recognize the tastes and preferences of the budding womanhood of the gushing girl, and to welcome both to the threshold of the earnest and independent life which so soon awaits them. Upon the judicious and kindly treatment of children by parents during these transition periods, depend the most important results in the perpetuation of family affection between parents and children till the end of

life. Family traditions and family affections and family pride, which connect successive generations by links of love and respect which are thus united, are better than any other patrimony.

The duties of children to their parents are summed up in the directions to obey, to confide in, to love and to care for, — or, in a single word, to honor, — them to the end of their lives. The only regulating force which they need, in respect to the direction and energy of these specific affections to which nature prompts and trains them, is that these affections shall not mislead them to offend against the more comprehensive laws of duty towards God and their fellow-men. The Christian precept is comprehensive and clear: “Children, obey your parents *in the Lord*, for this is right;” “Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.” The demands of parental authority may be offensive to the conscience, and contradict the acknowledged law of God. In every such case, they cannot bind the conscience, at least in the form in which they are given. When duties to parents seem to conflict with other duties, the apparent conflict will usually suggest some adjustment which shall avoid a too violent shock to the most sacred of the natural affections.

**Duties of
children to
honor their
parents.**

Such shocks need not often occur. When they are avoided, and when the claims and commands of parents are in harmony with those of our fellow-men and of God, there can be no more effective discipline to moral goodness and affection of every kind than is furnished by the discipline of filial obedience and honor. God himself is brought the nearest to us, and in the most moving ways, when he is revealed to us as our Father in heaven; and no appeal to our feelings and our faith inspires in us greater confidence and love than the declaration, “If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”

The rights of parents over their children, and of children

with respect to the parents, are summed up as the essential conditions to each party for the discharge of its appropriate functions. They are never exacting and inflexible claims on the part of those in whom they are vested. They are never to be claimed for their own private benefit or welfare (§ 222.) They exist as conditions of the welfare of the child upon whom the claim is enforced, or of the family of which the child is a member. They should be enforced no further than the well-being of a part or the whole of the family requires. They cease altogether to exist so soon as the reason for their existence is terminated.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE STATE: ITS NATURE, FUNCTIONS, AND AUTHORITY.

§ 275. AFTER the family comes *the state*, with its peculiar relationships, and the affections and duties which these relationships involve and enforce. It is almost superfluous to say that the state naturally grows out of the family, inasmuch as every family is already a state in miniature. Parents are necessarily legislators, judges, and executors of law, in the discharge of their appropriate functions as parents. Children and dependents are naturally and necessarily treated as subjects. The moment either pass over the threshold of their home, they recognize a larger family without, in which there is equal need for rule and an equal duty of subjection for the sake of public order and the general well-being of the community. Should a few families exist side by side, they would shortly become so connected with one another, not to say complicated, by consenting and dissenting interests, as to be forced to organize themselves into a commonwealth for the regulation and control of these interests. A single family left to itself would grow into a clan or a tribe, in which the oldest father would be accepted as the natural ruler, and his descendants subjected to him as the head, and to one another in various gradations of subordination. In other words, by those necessities of men's nature which are universally acknowledged and quickly discerned, there come to be accepted certain relations of beneficent authority and consequent moral obligation, which are first fixed by custom, and then sanctioned by the conscience.

The state
grows from
the family.

We do not need to follow the actual or imaginary growth of the state through its several stages of history and development, in order to understand its necessity, or to enforce its authority. It is comparatively unimportant to raise the question whether man has ever existed out of the state, or could long maintain a normal existence apart from some of the relations which an organized commonwealth involves. It is enough for our purposes to know that the state is one of the natural and normal conditions of human existence, and that, so soon as man recognizes his relations to his fellow-men, he finds himself in a community. So soon, also, as he attains to that stage of reflection which qualifies him to recognize any ethical relations between himself and his fellow-men, he assents to the truth as axiomatic that this community of men should be organized. If he finds that it is organized already, he accepts its institutions and its officials, as invested with authority over himself.

When we speak of a community as organized, we mean that special functions are assigned to certain of its members, for the guidance and control of the whole. Prominent among these functions are the origination, the interpretation, and the enforcement of law. The officials, or organs who perform these functions, represent and act in the place of the entire community. They do not in any sense constitute—they only represent—the state, which is supposed already to exist. The activity and interests of these organs are not personal. They are abused and perverted when they are regarded as such by themselves or by others. Even in the extremest despotism, the ethical or divine right by which the unrestrained monarch enforces his commands or sanctions his acts of cruelty, rests on the assumption that he holds his office only as a trust for the well-being of the community; and never, except by a palpable abuse of this trust, that he holds it for personal interests. Never was a more offensive falsehood uttered than the saying attributed to Louis XIV., *L'état, c'est moi*.

§ 276. This principle, when stated in another form, is the familiar doctrine that every government derives its authority from the consent, and is exercised for the welfare, of the governed. Not only does it derive its authority, but it is sustained in its existence, from this source alone. We do not ask how this consent is obtained, — whether it is through intimidation, or satisfaction. It is enough that it is actually given. Whether the government stands on the cruelty of its acts, and the terror which these acts evoke, or whether it is sustained by the thankful affections of the millions who bless its administration; whether terror palsies every effort for a change, or contentment finds no place for the desire of change, — the consent of the governed is its only possible or actual basis of support. In this sense it is true that every government, when ethically tested, is an organism through which the commonwealth or the community performs certain special functions which are essential to its well-being.

**Derives its
authority
from com-
mon consent.**

§ 277. As to what these functions of the state should be, there are serious diversities of opinion. While all agree that civil government, or the organized state, exists for the well-being of its citizens, and for this only, men differ widely as to what special ends should be proposed by the state, and what means should be employed in order to attain them. Some accept a very wide, others a very narrow, sphere for its aims and activities. These differences of opinion are of the highest significance in respect to political and economical conclusions, although of less importance in determining the duties of men to the state. They are most important for rulers and legislators, and for citizens so far as they choose their rulers and control their policy, but of less significance for citizens as members and subjects of the state. The thorough discussion of the several theories of the state, and the limits of its appropriate functions, is essential to the mastery of political and social science. Such inquiries are also not unimportant in their ethical bearings, especially in a free

**Different
views of its
functions.**

government ; inasmuch as an intelligent recognition of the duties of citizens, and of the spirit in which these duties should be performed, must depend more or less upon correct principles in respect to the aim and sphere of government. Ethics, however, in its relations to the state, has chiefly to do with the feelings and acts which duty requires of a man with respect to the government under which he finds himself. It only deals remotely with his duty to attempt to correct its theory in the way of enlarging or limiting its sphere of activity. The duty of men to reform the state, by bringing it back to its legitimate functions, is often important ; but it is by no means so significant nor so pressing as the duties of men under the state to which they actually belong. A state may be imperfectly organized when judged by a scientific ideal, or badly administered through the incompetence or the fault of its officials, while yet the most important duties of its citizens, and even of its officers, remain essentially unchanged.

The theories concerning the sphere and functions of the state may be divided into three classes : —

§ 278. (1) The first theory limits its activities to *the security and defence of the so-called natural rights of life, liberty, and property*. Its advocates contend that the state exists for the sole and exclusive function of defending these three inalienable rights of man, and for this function alone ; and that, so soon as it proposes to itself any wider sphere, it undertakes functions which it can neither legitimately propose, nor successfully perform. All that the individual need ask is, that he be hindered from nothing and aided in nothing which does not concern these cardinal interests, if only, in respect to his other interests and activities, he is left to his own activities, or the voluntary co-operation of his fellow-men. This theory derives plausibility and popularity from the unquestioned fact that the majority of governments have assumed a greater variety of functions than they could successfully fulfil. They have often, by intermeddling, hin-

(1) Theory
limits it to
the defence
of three nat-
ural rights.

dered the interests which they aimed to help, and have injured by excess the very causes which they were zealous to promote. By a not unnatural re-action, their critics have exalted a practical criticism of administration into the illegitimate induction of a principle, and inferred that the policy of non-interference on the part of the government, except in cases in which these three cardinal rights are concerned, is to be regarded as an axiom of political science.

This theory is demonstrated to be false by proving itself to be impracticable. Every government which would confine itself to this sphere of activity must define its conceptions of injuries to life, liberty, and property, and provide by statute for the methods of proof and process whenever these interests are assailed. It must also assign penalties for the violation of these rights. In making and executing these provisions, it must have in view the effects of its measures upon the welfare of the community. In other words, it must take account of the working of its measures upon the temper and habits of the community,—that is, upon the general welfare,—as truly as of its relation to the three great interests to which it is supposed to be limited. It is doubtless true, that, for the well-being of man, the maintenance of these three cardinal rights of men is of prime importance; but it is also true, that very many of the instrumentalities and methods by which these rights are maintained cannot be disregarded or set aside, as the proper subjects-matter of civil administration.

In point of fact, so limited a theory of state administration has never been put in practice, and is not likely to be. There are other interests besides the three great rights of man, which every government finds itself compelled to recognize; as, public decency, the public health, marriage and the family, pauperism, the common defence, the public wealth, communication by roads, rivers, etc. We do not add education and morality, and the enlargement of the resources of the country, or the increase of its manual skill or its

**False,
because im-
practicable.**

**Has never
been applied.**

inventive sagacity ; for it is questioned by some, whether governmental interference can possibly further or benefit these interests. It is enough that we show that there are other interests, besides the three cardinal rights of man, which the state often must care for in order that the defence and security of these very human rights may bring beneficial results.

§ 279. (2) The second theory allows the state to assume for itself the direction of almost every interest and activity of the individual citizen. It starts, perhaps, with an abstract theory of the natural supremacy of the state, which regards the individual citizen as existing exclusively or supremely for its well-being and glory. Or it adopts the paternal theory, which teaches that the state can take care of its citizens in most particulars better than they can care for themselves ; and consequently assumes to direct many of the details of their family and social life, their dress and diet and health, their occupations, their domiciles, and sometimes their personal amusements. It superintends the interests of education, morality, and religion, with careful and minute supervision. Such a government when administered by an irresponsible police, however fair in theory, and occasionally mild and benignant in administration, is usually irritating by its constant and needless intermeddling, which belittles the individual, and cripples private enterprise and development. For the exigencies of a great military power, it may be strong, efficient, and useful ; but it can prove eminently successful only when its citizens have been trained to a helpless dependence upon governmental interference, and are more or less incapable of caring for their personal interests.

§ 280. (3) Between these extremes of theory and practice, different governments propose to themselves wider or narrower spheres of public and private interests, according to the traditions of the past, the habits of the present, and, above all, according to the intelligence, the self-reliance, and the moral worth of the people. A small

(2) **Theory :**
the paternal
and despotic
theory.

(3) **The**
intermediate
theory.

state, with a homogeneous population, animated by high intelligence and a common religious faith, might not only accept, but it might demand, a vigorous governmental action in respect to trade, commerce, internal development, moral restraints, and religious direction, such as another community would neither sanction nor tolerate. One community would welcome, and even require, a system of compulsory education which would drive another into revolution.

It follows that it is impossible, in the strictest sense of the term, to propound or vindicate any so-called scientific theory of the state which shall mean any thing more than that a certain policy or system of measures is likely to work well or ill on a certain subject-material, or under certain political or social conditions. The state cannot be treated as a philosophical concept or abstract entity with certain essential constituents, nor as a material or mental substance with essential properties, which it is scientifically or morally bound to exemplify in action: but as a community of living beings, with varying characteristics, which is organized for more or fewer great public interests,—more or fewer according to the culture and habits of the people,—prominent among which are the security and defence of the rights of life, liberty, and property. Whether its government shall care for other interests than those, and what these interests shall be, must be determined by the controlling sentiment of the people.

To the moralist, the question is one of special practical interest, whether the state can rightfully legislate with respect to the education and moral culture of the community; and, if so, by what principles or rules shall it limit or regulate its procedure? It is not enough to reply, that all legislation professedly, and much of it actually, operates for the moral well-being of the community; inasmuch as social order and the security of natural rights are the essential conditions of moral health and moral progress. The question which the moralist asks is this: whether the state may

**Relation of
the state to
general
and moral
culture.**

legislate directly for the culture of its citizens as human beings, in order to improve their spiritual quality, as by education and social appliances of art, amusement, and instruction ; especially, may it legislate with a sole and direct reference to their moral elevation or reformation, for either or both as ends in themselves? or should it be limited, in its aims and its appliances, to the increase of its physical and economic resources, as the indirect but certain results of the improvement in the manhood of its population? May it adopt the Athenian theory, that the culture of its population is itself a legitimate object of its legislation and expenditure, or the Spartan theory that material strength in developed humanity and conquered nature should be its only appropriate aim? It is not easy to answer these

**Not easy to
formulate a
theory.** questions by any definite theory. The most rigid rejecters of the spiritual and ethical theory are

found to relax more or less in its application in practical administration, while the administration of the opposite theory with success and efficiency is not always easy. To enforce morality by laws which are more severe than the public conscience requires, and to introduce culture and education of a sort which the public taste does not demand, or public feeling does not desire, or which is higher than the mass of the people are qualified to receive, is always difficult, and often, not to say usually, becomes annoying and odious. All will agree, how-

**The state
cannot avoid
educational
and ethical
influences.** ever, that the state not only may, but must, legislate not only for the punishment, but also for the prevention, of crime. The community also knows, that public order cannot be preserved so long as a lower

stratum is becoming ignorant and brutalized from one generation to another. The judgment and conscience, even of a debased and demoralized community, respond to this truth ; and, for this reason, a right public sentiment will usually respond to any wise and reasonable efforts to weaken temptation and exposure, and to counteract evil influences by appliances for good. But the state cannot assume to be a moral censor or critic in respect to

those manners or amusements which do not offend the conscience or the taste of the majority of the community. It has no advantage for conducting the æsthetic or ethical culture of a coarse and immoral population: consequently every attempt to enact or enforce laws which look forward to a future reformation of manners or morals, as such, must necessarily fail or be more or less abortive. All that the government can do is to give voice and expression to the current public sentiment, and clothe it with organic authority. If the opinions and feelings of the community do not sustain and enforce the laws for culture or morality, the laws themselves will be brought into more or less of contempt and dishonor, and, with them, the cause in whose interests they are enacted.

Similarly in respect to education and culture. The state not only may, but must, educate its citizens, and give them culture to a certain degree, if it would increase its material wealth and enlarge its resources by their intelligence and skill, or defend itself against the dangers to which brutal ignorance would expose it from without. But why may it not go as far in providing libraries, in opening schools of art, and in furnishing amusements, as it does in endowing railways, deepening harbors, improving rivers, protecting forests, and enforcing quarantine?

Practically, we answer these questions thus: So far as the prevailing sentiment of the community will accept, or in any sense believes in, the salutary operation of measures like these, — whether in its intellectual, or moral, or æsthetic, or patriotic convictions, — and will enforce such legislation by efficient sympathy, so far is it wise to employ it, but no farther. But the state, as such, cannot often take the responsibility of anticipating a change of sentiment as the result of legislation. Legislation may do any thing which the operation of time and actual experiment is likely to justify, and the beneficent consequences of which can be clearly foreseen and generally assented to. But its appropriate duty is not to enforce, by law, changes in opinion, or manners, or conduct,

**Practically,
must be
regulated
by public
sentiment.**

which do not already approve themselves to the convictions of those whose opinions rule. This is true in a monarchical or aristocratic state, but pre-eminently in a republic: because, in a republic, the judgments and feelings of the community can be more easily ascertained, and can be directly and energetically made known; in other words, because public sentiment acts immediately and surely, to further or to embarrass any and all legislation for general and remote ends.

§ 281. Leaving this question of the proper functions of the state, we proceed to define *its essential conditions or characteristics*.

“What constitutes a state?”

It is essential that the state should occupy a definite and continuous landed territory. This is essential for convenience, if the authority of the government is to be respected, and its benefits are to affect its citizens. In order to both, the citizens must be readily distinguished and quickly reached. Two political communities claiming possession of a common soil could not possibly maintain what would deserve to be called a national existence for any considerable time. Two or more tribes of Bedouin Arabs or North-American Indians may alternately occupy the same pasture or hunting-grounds; but, for the time being of occupation, each must practically treat the territory which it occupies as exclusively its own. The exigencies of civilized life require the continued occupation and control of an entire territory. Some of the territory adjacent to each may be occupied as border-ground, — as a so-called march, or a neighboring ocean, or a broad estuary or river; but, for all this, the nation or any political society must have its own territorial home, all of which must be controlled as its own. Without the sole and exclusive occupation of continuous territory, separate dwellings, fixed employments, and permanent neighbors can hardly be conceived of. Except on this condition, agriculture, village and city life, and an advancing civilization would be well-nigh impossible.

These obvious facts justify the rightfulness of repelling any invasion of territory, and defence from every form of assault; inasmuch as every citizen is in some sense a partner in this common domain. If he is justified in contending for the continued existence of his nation, he is justified in repelling an invader from its soil. He is a partner in whatever property the nation has in the common soil. He is not only justified in assisting, but he is morally obliged to assist, his neighbor in the occupancy of his individual share; and both are morally obliged to aid each other in maintaining this first condition of national well-being in the control of the soil which they own in common as fellow-citizens of their common country. We do not assert that the attitude of repellent self-defence is to be maintained forever, nor that a surrender of territory in part or whole can never be morally right. All that we assert is, that the defence of a common territory is a necessity and a duty, if it is morally lawful to assert ownership in property at all. This single consideration settles the question of the lawfulness of defensive warfare, in the minds of all those persons who believe in the right to defend individual property from violent invasion of any kind. This common territory must be definitely bounded. Unless its limits are definite, it cannot exercise efficient and practical control. The citizens can neither know one another nor know their rulers, unless the limits of their state are marked in the soil, and defined by relations of place; neither ruler nor subject can exercise his appropriate functions. For the same reasons, the territory of a nation must be continuous on the land. A small insulated territory which can only be reached by crossing another's soil cannot ordinarily be controlled or benefited, even by a strong nation, if it be severed from it by another intervening country. Nothing but a strong treaty or an intimate alliance between the nation that surrounds it, and the nation to which it belongs, can connect it with the mother-country.

§ 282. Next: every government must be supreme within its

own domain. That it must control its own subjects, is obvious enough. That is no government which does not govern its citizens. The principle of self-government does not imply that law is not supreme, and that whatever the organized community ordains is not clothed with unquestioned authority. A self-governed people requires organization as truly as the most arbitrary monarchy, and invests its organs as truly with the majesty of law. However limited be the authority of a government, or however rare the occasions on which it meets any one or all its citizens, so far as it meets or governs them at all, it meets them as having an undisputed and sovereign authority. Beyond this authority, there is no earthly appeal. The decisions of this supreme authority must be final. Not only is this true of its own subjects or citizens, but it is true of the citizens of every other state so long as they reside within its domain. Exceptions may be made in favor of "the stranger within the gates;" but the fact that these exceptions are made shows that the power which concedes might withhold them. The stranger, by the act of coming into a state which is not his own, is understood as asking leave to come, under conditions; which conditions are rightfully prescribed by the government which receives him as a guest. When he leaves his own country, he cuts himself from that protection of which his own government assures him, and trusts himself to those assurances which the neighboring sovereignty gives, that it will hospitably protect his person and rights.

An apparent exception to the doctrine of exclusive sovereignty over the same territory might suggest itself in the case of the government of the United States. Let it be granted, says the objector, that the National or Federal Government is the supreme power over a certain territory, say of a single State, in respect to certain functions: it follows, that, in respect to other functions of local administration, the State is also supreme. It follows that two organized commonwealths are supreme within the limits of the same territory, as the National and State Governments within the territory of Massachusetts or South Carolina. The reply seems to be obvious: Were neither Massachusetts nor South Carolina liable to be revised and

Must be supreme in its own domain.

Apparent exception in the United States.

judged in respect to the exercise of its functions, should either venture to assert or exercise functions which the States have surrendered to the Federal Government, thereby constituting the people of the United States in some particulars supreme, each would be as truly a sovereign as the Nation. But both are thus liable; and an organ for such revisal is provided in the highest court of the Nation, which court controls the executive of every State and every other organ of its public life in certain particulars. Were the Nation liable to be summoned at the bar of each State to answer for its usurpation of any of its reserved rights, and were there organs provided for such a trial and judgment, then each State might be equally supreme or sovereign with itself. But such an organ is not provided. Whether or not there was a scientific foresight which discerned that only a single commonwealth can be supreme in one territory, there was a practical sagacity which excluded the incorporation of such a doctrine in the framework of the government.

It follows from these essential attributes of domain and sovereignty, that the state is justified in self-assertion and self-defence. The fact that it finds itself in existence in an organized and independent form, is *prima-facie* evidence that it is worth defending against an invader. Nothing except force can secure its continued existence when invaded or threatened. If it is the duty or right of a community to maintain its existence as a state, it is the duty of its citizens to defend it by force. The maxim, to resist not evil, when interpreted to imply that war on the part of a state is immoral, would equally require that evil in the form of robbery or murder may not be prevented by physical force or punishment.

The state
may defend
its territory
and itself.

Whether aggressive war is ever morally justifiable, or a war which proposes the conquest or the weakening of another state for the commercial or precautionary advantage or the aggrandizement of the attacking nation, is a question which is not easily answered. We may safely affirm that the majority of such wars cannot be justified by the moral law. We need not deny—we may concede—that the conquests of Greece and Rome did much to spread the civilization and culture which made the diffusion of

Lawfulness
of aggressive
war.

ethical and Christian morality more easy, and also that the conquests of Spain and England have opened the door for the proclamation of Christian truth; and yet not be justified in the inference that many, or indeed any, of these wars, were either required or justified by the law of duty. Doubtless force would now and then have been called for, and invasion by land and by sea, under any conditions of political progress, and independent national life; but not on the gigantic scale, and with the rapacious and self-seeking spirit, which have characterized the majority of ancient and modern wars.

It is pre-eminently true of national life and national acts, that we must take the world as we find it. While the actions and attitude of every country ought to be friendly, and magnanimous, and peace-loving in the extreme, no country can or ought to be unmindful of the fact, that its neighbors have been schooled in the traditions of invasion and conquest. If it is morally right for a nation to defend itself when invaded, and to preserve by resistance its own national life, it is also morally right to take every needed precaution against such violence, and to secure our own integrity and peace against the fear of such an evil. It is more than right: it is a present and constant duty.

War, however, is by no means an unmixed evil, if it be forced upon a people by the action of another nation,—especially if this action be unwarranted, —or if it be hallowed and elevated by the self-sacrifice and courage which war stimulates and involves. The highest and most Christian morality has not unfrequently been elevated and confirmed in those wars which have been prosecuted in the service of one's country, especially when the cause of one's country has also been the cause of freedom or religion or any other commanding human interest. These considerations all indicate and prove that to fight for one's country may not only be morally right, but not infrequently becomes morally obligatory.

§ 283. The special form in which a government is organized is known as *its constitution*. This constitution may not be formally described or enacted by any decree, or described and assented to by statute or instrument. It may exist only as a collection of customs which are preserved by tradition or sanctioned by the practice of other generations; or it may be distinctly enacted and written as the fundamental law of the land, by which every special statute and decree must be tested, and may be tried in a court of last resort. Such a constitution may be limited to the acceptance by a tribe or an empire of the supremacy of a special line of hereditary chiefs or emperors; it may consist of a series of declaratory acts, or a line of judicial decisions; it may be largely only a collection of long-cherished and inherited customs; or it may be expanded into a minute and carefully considered written document. However it originates, it must be practically recognized as defining the government in fact, which exists by the consent of the community, and consequently possesses a moral authority which commands the allegiance and binds the conscience of each inhabitant and citizen.

The constitution
of a state.

CHAPTER XV.

LAW AND ITS ENFORCEMENT.

§ 284. WHATEVER else may be true of the state, we assume that one of its most prominent functions is to assure **Must enforce and execute its laws.** to its citizens the enjoyment of their rights, and to defend them in the exercise of the same. It is presumed, that, so far as individual citizens are unmolested, they will assert and exercise these rights under the impulses of nature. Left to themselves, they will acquire property, defend their lives, and assert their personal freedom. So soon as they are molested or hindered in these activities, or come into conflict with one another, unless their neighbors — and their neighbors organized as the state — shall come to their help, they will use force in individual self-defence. What a man may rightfully do for himself or his neighbors may do for him, in repelling the invader of his rights, the organized state may certainly perform. It follows, that one of the most important functions of the state is to defend and secure these natural rights. In the view of some, as we have seen, this is its sole function.

It is because it is known or feared that these rights will be **Necessity of force.** interfered with or denied, that the aid of the state is resorted to ; indeed, that its existence becomes a necessity, and permanent provisions are made against interference or invasion. Were it presumed that men are generally controlled by the law of duty and of love, there would be no occasion for any action of the state, except perhaps to instruct the

uninformed in what they do not know concerning the causes of evil and good to themselves and the community. Instruction and caution would, in such a case, be the only functions which the organized state would need to exercise. Experience and the pressure of fact soon teach men that the state must now and then go farther, and use organized force with at least some of its members. Whatever indefiniteness or diversity of opinion may exist as to the right of the state to use the methods of moral or intellectual instruction and enlightenment, there is almost entire unanimity in the view that the state not only may, but must, punish those who invade the natural rights of its members, and, in view of the occasions which are certain to arise, must make arrangements to do so. In other words, while the state assumes as a truth that certain rights are assigned to man in the economy of nature, as the conditions of his normal existence and his true well-being, it assumes as a fact that these rights must be defended and secured by organized force.

The duty
and right of
punishment.

Even the extremest non-resistants and the most ultra doctrinaires do not deny that a man who turns himself into a beast of prey, carrying murder and violence into every house, may rightfully be chained or confined. But both of these restraints are in some sort functions or forms of punishment. They certainly embody all the elements which are most offensive in punishment. It would seem, that, when the intention to confine and restrain is declared beforehand in the form of a warning or preventive announcement, it has all the characteristics of a proclaimed law and threatened punishment as essential functions of organized society. The state has a right thus to interpose itself between the invader of the natural rights of its citizens, and to hinder him from perpetrating the evil which might otherwise ensue. Not only has it this right, but it is its duty to exercise it. For this end prominently, if not primarily, does the state exist.

Non-resist-
ants and doc-
trinaires.

§ 285. The simplest, and ethically conceived the lowest, form of punishment, is the infliction of *physical pain or inconvenience*. This addresses itself to man in the lowest conditions of existence and through the lowest impulses of his nature, appealing as it does to those sensi-

Lowest form
of punish-
ment.

bilities to which all men are definitely and wakefully alive, and for which all men have common capacities of enjoyment or suffering. Viewed apart and by itself, punishment as physical pain or inconvenience takes the lowest form in the scale of dignity or quality. Strong and coarse as it may seem as an operative force, yet, considered apart from the other forces which it suggests and the other sensibilities to which it appeals, it is weak in its restraining power, even with men who seem to be wholly animalized, when their passions of greed or hate are aroused.

The next highest element or form of punishment is *the felt displeasure of the community*, which is supposed to be suggested or expressed by whatever physical evil is threatened and inflicted. When the handcuffs are for the first time put upon the convicted thief, or the doors of the lock-up are closed upon the arrested disturber of the peace, it is not so much the restraint or personal inconvenience, or, again, the dungeon-walls and the iron bars or the bad air and the hard fare of the prison, that either feels most keenly, as it is the fact that he is reproached and dishonored in the judgment of his fellow-men, and that they condemn and disapprove of his acts and of himself. From the pain, and sometimes the agony, which he suffers from this source, he seeks to find relief in the same direction. The principal relief that he can find is in the fickle and interested sympathy of his fellows in disgrace, and the feeble attempts which he makes to convince himself that not only his fellow-prisoners, but all men, would commit the same deeds under similar circumstances; i. e., that all men are alike sensual and thievish and cruel. He may attempt to affect insensibility to this disapproval which he feels so keenly, but he can neither deny nor disown his inmost nature. In fighting against the contempt or disapproval of others, he fights against himself, his own convictions, and his own self-condemnation.

We do not discuss the question, as to the proportion which

this element of punishment bears to the others in respect to effectiveness. It is enough that we recognize the truth, that the effectiveness of punishment as a restraining and preventive force depends more or less on the sensibility of man to that displeasure of his fellow-men which is expressed by the physical evil which it directly inflicts. The presence of this element dignifies punishment, exalting it from a brute agency to the dignity of a personal force, and connects it with our human sympathies, giving it a place among spiritual relationships.

The effective-
ness of pun-
ishment.

Were any thing more required to enforce this truth, it would be found in the unquestioned fact, that, when punishment fails of being sustained by the sympathy of the community, it loses much, if not the most, of its preventive force, and is sometimes even sought for as a passport to popular favor, and gloried in as a condition of enviable notoriety. This is attested by the triumphant spirit in which the martyrs of liberty and of faith have accepted their tortures so long as they have been sustained by the sympathy of their fellow-sufferers, or that great unseen company of those whom they have believed were with them in silent approbation. As ordinarily inflicted and received, the punishments of the law carry with them more or less of this implied disapprobation of right-minded men; and this is essential to their dignity and personal force. It is because the commonwealth of my fellow-men are supposed to consent to those who put on the handcuffs, or drive home the prison-door, or proceed to take my life, that these punishments are invested with their undefined and intolerable terror in those communities which are composed of men who can reflect enough to feel it. It is only as our fellow-men are recognized as forming a community held together by bonds of social sympathy to which each individual is sensitively responsive, — it is only on this supposition, that punishment is invested with its higher attributes, and that the state is conceived of in its higher relations to those persons whom it protects in their rights by an appeal to that common

sympathy which fuses them for the moment into a single personality.

§ 286. Higher and still more effective are *the moral relations* of punishment. A true philosophy of man must recognize him as endowed with a conscience, and thereby as rendered susceptible to motives that are still more exalted and powerful, even in his relations to the state and the penal law.

Indeed, the state, should it desire it ever so earnestly, could not fail to use these ethical relations, and the affections which they involve. First of all, it divides offences against the rights and interests of its citizens into two classes, the civil and the criminal; and uniformly recognizes in the last the *moral* element of *intelligent intention* and *voluntary responsibility*. In criminal cases, whenever it punishes, it supposes the punishment to be justified by the conscience of the offender and the sympathy of all right-minded citizens; i.e., of all citizens who respect their own moral judgments, and enforce them by their own self-approval. In every such case, the punishment is not complete until this last element is brought into action, and the conscience of the offender passes upon him with his own self-condemning sentence, which is swiftly followed by his personal self-reproach. The punishment of the state, however terrible it may be in every other respect, is never armed with its sharpest sting, till the sufferer becomes alive to the truth that the evil which he suffers not only expresses the disapprobation of his fellows, but that they justify themselves in this disapproval by their own consciences. In other words, punishment in its higher and fully developed form is always moral, even though the offence against the state which it condemns is only concerned with civil relations; for the reason that it is always inflicted upon moral persons, all of whose actions must always have a moral aspect, and come under the law of duty. We might without violence suppose the same matter of punishment as to physical evil to be used with beings of different grades of

capacity : first, with animals, and these endowed with different capacities of intelligence and feeling, and especially with differing sensibilities with regard to the favor or caresses of man ; next, with a community of idiots, or imperfectly developed men ; next, with a race of men perfect in every other respect, if such could be supposed, only destitute of moral personality. Should the same commands be given to each of these beings, and be enforced by the same physical sanctions, how much more would they signify to the one class than to the other !

It might still be objected, as it often is, that the state concerns itself with the actions only, without concerning itself with the purposes or intentions. It is sufficient to reply, that in criminal cases it always considers the purposes and feelings, receiving testimony and employing tests solely to prove or disprove their sanity and responsibility. It were more exact to say that it always presumes an intention and moral purpose, and contents itself with the rational interpretation or construction of the intentions, as indicated by the actions. It does not profess to read the conscious purposes, or to inspect the inner man, but uses the actions as criteria by which to judge the feelings and purposes. By means of the same, also, it measures the grades of crime, as between theft and burglary ; the degree of criminal intention in the two acts of crime being interpreted by the nature of the external action.

**The state
must con-
sider the
intentions.**

From all these considerations we may safely conclude, that, in the infliction of punishment, the state always supposes itself to have to do with moral persons, and recognizes moral relations as the most efficient of motives and the most authoritative of sanctions. It assumes, even when it does not affirm, that God and the conscience are on its side ; and it provides for its grades of punishment on the theory that the conscience of the convicted criminal will justify its milder or severer sentences to evil, and that the consciences of the community of moral beings will conspire with the same.

Conclusion.

§ 287. We also conclude that the state not only has the right but is morally bound, to punish the invader of the rights of its citizens, or the assailant of its own existence. But how far may it proceed in such punishment ?

**Limits of
punishment.**

What extreme of evil may it inflict upon the aggressor upon the life and liberty and property of its citizens? We reply: Any extreme which is necessary for the defence of these rights, and for the defence of itself. The rights in question must be secured to the community, at any cost of evil to the man who deliberately and persistently invades them. He shows himself by his acts to be an enemy of the public welfare, and such deeds must be prevented by the fear of any form of evil which the invader can suffer.

It follows that punishment may be capital whenever and as far as it can be shown that such punishments are the best fitted to prevent the crimes in question. It does not follow that they must be capital, even for the taking of life; but only that the state is justified in inflicting such punishments whenever it can be shown that they are best fitted to effect the object. If a man as an individual may defend his life, his liberty, or his property, by taking the life of the assailant, then surely the state may threaten to do the same, and may execute its threat. It does not follow that it is right to do the same, unless this necessity exists: on the contrary, the right to inflict such punishment may be so exercised as in a great degree to defeat the general ends of punishment, and to weaken the moral force of the government itself. The freedom and recklessness with which capital punishment was inflicted for petty thefts a few generations since, under the English law, are horrible to think of; not because it is not right for a man to defend his property by shooting a burglar in extreme necessity, or for the government to do the same under the stress of martial law, but because the multiplication of extreme punishments for minor crimes tends to accustom the community to regard all crimes as equally evil, and practically to esteem murder as no worse than theft, as when a man or child is hung for both. In other words, brutality in any form tends to weaken the moral element in the administration of punishment.

This is only one of the many proofs, that, while the imme-

mediate design of punishment is to prevent the repetition of a particular crime, it also proposes other ends, — ends which are closely and inevitably connected with what is technically distinguished as punishment proper. These secondary ends are twofold, — the reformation of the criminal, and the moral education of the community in such a way as to avoid the necessity of punishment. Both these effects are, indeed, necessarily incidental to punishment proper. The fact that all civilized governments regard them in their penal arrangements is also decisive that they assume the right and acknowledge the duty to care for the moral welfare of the community, and propose a wider sphere of responsibility than its concern for the so-called natural rights to property, liberty, and life (§ 278). Whatever the theories of political philosophers may be, and however rigid and logical their so-called scientific doctrines of the sphere and functions of the state, practical legislators and actual courts of law can never be unmindful that the citizens who constitute the state draw the breath of their life in an atmosphere of ethical convictions and sentiment; that they at once invigorate the force of law by their allegiance to duty, and temper its severity by the softening and pitying element of human sympathy.

The modern theories and practice of prison discipline are also indications and proof that civil governments recognize other obligations than those of punishment in dealing with offenders. These uniformly combine arrangements for recovery and reform with the repellent and menacing apparatus for punishment; and, in so doing, they recognize a certain duty of moral culture and recovery as essential to the well-being of the state, and the community for which the state exists.

§ 288. This suggests the question whether the government may ever remit a threatened penalty; or, Can strict justice ever allow the state to pardon?

This question involves inquiries still more minute: e.g., Does

Secondary
ends of
punishment.

Modern
theories of
punishment.

The lawfulness and
propriety
of pardon.

not justice, as such, demand that the threatened punishment should be invariably inflicted, unless evidence of some sort be furnished that the offence was less serious than was originally supposed when sentence was pronounced? Such evidence might be found in some new light in respect to the actual moral unworthiness of the criminal, difficult as it might be to employ such a test.

The advocate of what is called a natural sense of justice, as an original intuition or sentiment, can find no place for pardon as such, under any supposable circumstances. In his theory, justice is a supreme and sacred authority, which must have its pound of flesh to the minutest fibre, and from whose summary decision there can be no appeal. Though it may pity, it can never relent; though it may love, it can never remit the penalty. If this be true of penal justice as administered by man, much more, it is rightly reasoned, must it be true of divine justice, which surely cannot remit the threatened penalty, nor terminate it, until it shall have been fully suffered or entirely paid.

§ 289. These difficulties both speculative and practical, in the ethical sphere both human and divine, are set aside or avoided by a theory of penal justice which conceives of it as a form or manifestation of moral benevolence, which is called justice because impersonal equity is one of its chief characteristics, and because its love for moral goodness is so energetic and intense as to manifest in ways of penalty the displeasure which it cannot but feel against evil affections and evil deeds and evil men, and which consequently must sympathize with the enforcement of law and the infliction of penalty in the state and the moral universe. Such moral love, though it be called justice, may also desire to reclaim and recover to that moral health which is shown in repentance as manifested in acts of duty. If now this recovering pity reclaims and pardons at the same time that it leaves unquestioned its just and energetic displeasure towards moral

**Theory which
adjusts the
difficulties.**

evil, it is as just to pardon, in the largest sense of justice, as it is to inflict the threatened penalty. It may be questioned whether this higher ideal of justice can often be safely applied under the limitations of the human state, which must concern itself chiefly with external conduct, and can only indirectly and imperfectly deal with the inner life. But we cannot doubt that it controls that spiritual kingdom in which moral relations are supreme, and the hearts of all are judged by the discerning yet pitying eye of the living God. We need not vex ourselves with the vexed questions of theological polemics to be assured that Christianity, either by symbol or fact, — or, as we believe, by the most significant of symbols and the most real of facts, — has sanctioned the theory of moral administration in which the sacredness of penal justice and the recovery of the offender are recognized, sought for, and achieved.

CHAPTER XVI.

DUTIES TO THE STATE, CIVIL AND POLITICAL.

§ 290. THE obligation to recognize civil government has already been explained as comprehended in and enforced by the law of love. All our duties as citizens of the state spring from and are included in the general obligation to promote the highest well-being of our fellow-men. Those relations of men to one another which we call civil, are essential to their well-being. Every man recognizes them as such; and hence every man recognizes the duty to respect these as actual, and as invested with their legitimate importance and authority.

The leading duties which man owes to civil government are divided into two classes, — his duties as a subject, and his duties as an administrator of the government. Sometimes these are distinguished as *civil* and *political*, according as a man is regarded as a citizen of the commonwealth and under its authority, or as a member of its polity, or its governing class. This distinction is of special significance, particularly in its application to a republican form of government.

We begin with the duties of the citizen as thus defined, and first with his civil duties.

§ 291. (1) It is the duty of every man to recognize the authority of the government which prevails in the country in which he finds himself, whether a constant resident or a temporary sojourner. A person may have been a resident in the

United States or Great Britain from his birth, or a lodger in either for a night. In either case, it is his duty, and equally his duty, to respect the government of the country in which he is present. As has already been explained, civil government, to fulfil its mission of blessings, must be supreme or sovereign within its territory. It is every man's duty to further or promote this service of good. It makes no difference, so far as this special obligation is concerned, whether he is a citizen or a stranger. The deliberate or careless enemy or antagonist of the government which controls the soil on which he is a guest is an enemy of mankind.

(1) To recognize the authority of the state.

The doctrine has indeed found a few advocates, that a man might disown all allegiance even to the government of his country, on giving due notice that he would assert no claims for its protection. Not a few idealists with lofty moral pretensions have claimed in this way to escape their seeming personal responsibility for the acts of a bad government, by professing to refuse to accept any favors at its hands. They did not reflect that it is as impossible to escape from the benefits as it is from the responsibilities of the government of a country in which we live. Those idealists who have dreamed of founding a pure society, in which government and authority should be resolved into the consenting consciences of its members, and would thus fulfil their dainty and impracticable ideals, have never succeeded in dispensing altogether with authority for the restraint of the conscience from acts which otherwise would not have been prevented, nor with physical force for the repression of those brutal impulses which now and then are certain to assert themselves.

Mistaken and fanatical views.

§ 292. (2) It is the duty of every man to possess and cherish those feelings of special interest in his own country which are the natural and necessary consequences of moral love to his kind. It has been abundantly illustrated, that the lover of his fellow-men in general will cherish and obey, and thus cultivate and strengthen, the

(2) To cherish special patriotic feelings.

special emotions which he feels towards those who are neighbors to him in residence, and who are familiar and dear to him by being fellow-laborers in good works, and receivers of common benefits ; who share in giving and receiving gratitude, confidence, sympathy, pity ; who are with him in his fears and hopes. in his labors and sacrifices. Inasmuch as generous love to our fellow-men is a universal duty, and these consequences of its presence and exercise are its abundant and grateful fruits, patriotic feeling is also of universal obligation. Moreover, as these special affections should be cultivated by definite acts and sacrifices, so patriotism becomes a duty, and should be conscientiously cherished as an affection which is at once the natural expression and rational consequence of a benevolent will.

§ 293. (3) It is the duty of the subject to contribute to the support of the government to the extent and in the measure which the law requires. No government can exist without the pecuniary contributions of its subjects. By the nature of the case, the governing organs must prescribe the amount which is required, and compel the payment of it. A government is no government which does not claim and exercise the authority to exact from its subjects the taxes which it prescribes. The citizen who does not respond to this claim by complying with its requisitions fails in his duty, and offends against the moral law. The tax may be unreasonable and disproportionate, and ruinous to both government and citizen ; and yet if it is ordered it must be paid, for the simple reason that it is the function of the government to decide questions of this sort, and the duty of the subject to accept its decision when it is final. It need not be said that it may not only be the right, but it may be the duty, of the citizen to reason and remonstrate with the government, or to seek a change in its decisions by all lawful means ; but after the decision is made, it is equally his duty to obey, whether the tax be equitable or oppressive.

§ 294. (4) Similarly, it is the duty of the citizen to support and defend his government, and at times even at the risk and sacrifice of his life. A government cannot exist without being now and then assailed, either in the person of some of its officers, or by an armed force which avowedly seeks to rob or humble or subjugate it. Its only remedy in such cases is force, and the use of force as against force involves the exposure of the life. We do not say that it is the duty of every citizen to hazard his life in such a need, but simply that this is the duty of some of its citizens; for without such exposure or sacrifice the government must be weakened or destroyed, and a government which cannot withstand invaders from without or sedition from within cannot long continue to exist. Impotence to repel force by force is but another term for anarchy. It is with this duty, as it is with the duty to pay one's taxes: the government itself must determine who and in what way each individual shall discharge his obligations, but when its decisions are reached they should be implicitly obeyed.

(4) To support and defend the government.

§ 295. (5) This leads us to the comprehensive principle that in general every requirement of the government must be obeyed, with two or three important qualifications and exceptions. That the principle in general is true, is evident from the considerations already adduced. The supposed or alleged exceptions will serve to limit the rule on the one hand, and to confirm it on the other.

(5) To obey every law, with certain exceptions.

(a) The laws enacted and enforced may be clearly unwise and even mischievous. It is very unfortunate that this should ever be true. Civil government exists for the welfare of the community. Every provision and statute which is made purports to be for the well-being of the people. But lawmakers are not always honest or wise: they not unfrequently fail to be fully informed, or to judge wisely and justly as to what the public interest is or requires. Even when they are not fully informed, or fail to decide rightly,

(a) Suppose the law is unwise.

they are not always honest in following their judgments. And yet it is implied, in the very nature of civil government, that whatever is enacted or ordered as a rule by the organic power should be invested with moral authority, however unwise or injurious it may be. Its unwisdom and its evil influences do not in the least release the conscience of the subject from obeying its orders and complying with its exactions. Unless this is true, civil government is impossible. Its very essence consists in the authority of the organs of the state to decide as to what is to be done and avoided by the subjects of the state. The fact that the people choose their lawmakers, even if every individual were supposed to take part in the election, does not in the least weaken the authority of the laws which they make, however weak or immoral may be the motives by which, when chosen, they are controlled, or however unwise may be the laws which they make. The experience of every generation confirms the truth which dictated the remark of Chancellor Oxenstiern, "*Nescis, mi fili, quantillâ prudentiâ homines regantur;*" but the same experience also confirms the truth that law, when enacted by the existing authorities, must be respected as supreme and decisive. The evil consequences may be obvious to all competent observers, and bring speedy disaster and dishonor to the country; and yet the laws must rule the conscience, and demand obedience.

§ 296. (b) The laws may not only be unwise and even mischievous: they may be demoralizing, and in that sense offensive to the conscience. Examples of such laws are those which tempt men to dishonesty or crime by unwise and excessive taxation, by furnishing facilities and opportunities for theft, by stimulating the vicious or sensual appetites, by unskillful criminal jurisprudence, and by defective arrangements for marriage and divorce. Obedience to the laws supposed does not necessarily involve an immoral act on the part of the citizen or subject, though the indirect operation and influence of the law may be morally hurtful, inas-

(b) Suppose
the law is
mischievous.

much as such laws, though demoralizing, do not involve personal immorality in every citizen. Consequently they must be obeyed, for the reason that the government has enacted them ; and for this reason they bind the conscience.

These evil consequences may be freely discussed, in case the government does not forbid ; their demoralizing tendencies may be portrayed and exposed : but, whenever the law as such meets the citizen, he must obey it because it is the law.

§ 297. (c) The laws may require immoral acts, — acts which contradict any one of the plain commands of conscience. Obviously, such supposed commands must respect the external actions only. They may forbid acts of plain duty, or command immoral deeds. The feelings and purposes cannot be reached by human legislation. It is obvious that such laws should be disobeyed. The judgment of conscience is supreme. It is in the name of the moral law, and only by its authority, that allegiance is required to any civil law. When such a law usurps the place of the moral law on which it stands, it has no authority to which it can appeal. The same authority which in the one case commands obedience, in the other commands the opposite. Cases of this kind are not likely often to occur ; but, whenever they do occur, they admit of but one solution, — a law to commit an immoral act can never bind the conscience. It is not unfrequently true that acts which are judged to be immoral by some men are not so in fact. Acts which would be immoral were they not required by law may also cease to be so when the law enjoins them. It is not always easy to determine whether an act is immoral, especially if it is enjoined by civil government ; but it is clear, that, so soon as it is thus judged, the command to perform — or, as the case may be, to avoid — the act in question has no moral authority. It will be observed that the cases adduced are hypothetical only. The question is not raised, whether, in a constitutional government, such a case can ever arise.

(c) Suppose
it requires
immoral
actions.

§ 298. (*d*) The laws may require or forbid actions which are forbidden or required by God. In case of a positive command of God, or any requirement which such disobedience to God. a command involves, the moral authority of God is supreme. The law of the state has, in every such case, no authority over the conscience. "We ought to obey God, rather than men."

Men may mistake as to what God does actually command. They may infer that God commands an act which he would forbid, or which is entirely indifferent. There is ample room for mistakes and inferences of this sort. The principle remains true and important, notwithstanding, however serious are the mistakes of man in respect to questions of this sort, or disastrous the consequences which follow in fanaticism and civil disorder.

§ 299. (*e*) The laws may be unconstitutional and tyrannical. In other words, they may be the result of usurpation, in respect to form or administration. Such laws or acts may be disobeyed or resisted for the purpose of testing their legality at the proper tribunals. They may even be resisted in order to call the attention of the community to their illegality, or the evils which they involve, even when obedience involves no violation of the conscience.

Two cases supposed. In the first case, when the law or ruling of the government does not offend the conscience, and commands no immorality, it may be disobeyed and called in question by an appeal to whatever tribunals are provided by the organization of the government, for the purpose of testing the validity and authority of whatever assumes to be law. Any act of disobedience or apparent disloyalty, which has this purpose, cannot be considered immoral, whatever form it may assume; inasmuch as the government itself provides for an appeal to Cæsar as the supreme judge.

In the second case supposed, when the law is disobeyed

knowingly and finally, in order to direct or arouse the attention of the community to any evils in its working, the offender assumes a grave responsibility. He takes the first step towards revolution. It is true that there is a long distance between the first and the final step; but he assumes the position of deliberate and open disobedience, not because the act or order is affirmed immoral, but simply that he may express his own disapproval of what the government requires, in order to excite the government to a change in its legislation.

It is obvious enough, though it is not always conceded, that whether the act required by the government be immoral, or inexpedient, the man who disobeys or resists is morally bound to accept and submit himself to the penalty which the law provides, whether it be

Obligation in both cases to accept the penalty.

fine or stripes, imprisonment or banishment, or death. Whether he discharges his conscience by refusing to obey a law because it requires an immoral act, or manifests his patriotism or his humanity by protecting an offender against an unconstitutional or an injurious enactment, he owes it to the government under which he lives to honor its sovereignty by accepting whatever penalty it assigns him. He may escape from this sovereignty by abandoning its domain; but so long as he lives within its territory he is bound to obey all its laws except those against which he protests, and, if sentenced to any penalty, to accept that penalty without resistance.

To claim a general liberty of abandoning the government because it has wronged his conscience, or committed more or fewer acts of oppression, and to resist its authority while one lives within its domain, is to commit a most heinous offence against one's fellow-men. Whatever may be the ground in the abuses of the government itself, organized society brings too many blessings to its members and subjects, not to impose upon every man the duty of submitting himself to its control in every form of obedience which conscience makes possible.

§ 300. (*f*) The last supposition which we propose is when

the constitution is frequently and persistently violated, or the administration of the government becomes intolerable, or so fraught with abuses in its management as to outweigh all the evils which attend or threaten a change in one or both. If all government derives its authority and finds its life in the consent of the governed, there may come a time when the common or universal sentiment breaks out into a loud acclaim that the evils or abuses which are suffered cannot be greater, and may be less, than those which will attend a revolution. This common conviction is the only justification, as it is the only impulse, of a common resistance to the authority of the state.

(f) Suppose the administration to be intolerable. Moralists and publicists and divines have questioned whether such a conviction can ever be warranted, and whether such a conviction, if it did exist, could ever be so generally diffused as to become a common sentiment, so definitely and sympathetically held as to justify an armed revolution. It is evident that absolute success can rarely, if ever, be assured beforehand. An insurgent or revolutionary population can never be absolutely certain that they are strong enough to withstand the organized force of the established government, assisted, as it may be, by neighboring powers. But it can be assured, by the severity and universality of its own calamities, that, should it fail, it can hardly suffer worse, and possibly may suffer less, than it does under present abuses. It is only when such a conviction is wrought into the minds of the mass of the people by the universality, the intensity, and the continuance of its sufferings, that a revolutionary movement is justified to the conscience. This conviction can never be tested or measured by any logical criteria or any scientific parallels. Every justified revolution must plead its own cause, and urge its own defence, and risk its own failure.

A failure of success does not necessarily involve criminality in the intentions or the acts of its originators or their coadjutors. In many, not to say the most, of our external actions,

whether they are trivial or important, we are liable to form mistaken judgments, even if our intentions are the purest. But if these intentions involve serious results, and their consequences concern the stability of the government and the civil peace and order of a vast community, recklessness and haste are always criminal. A revolution is to the peace and order, the enjoyments and the hopes, of millions of men, what an earthquake is to a portion of the earth's surface and every thing which enriches and beautifies it. Professed revolutionists are ordinarily the most reckless and dangerous and most unprincipled of demagogues, the natural enemies of mankind; because they unsettle and destroy one of the most comprehensive and important of human blessings, the order and authority of the civil state. Whether they are silent conspirators against the peace and stability of their own or a foreign country, or whether they are violent and noisy preachers of sedition, they are the enemies of mankind, and usually deserve to be shunned and avoided as raging wild beasts.

Failure does
not imply
criminality.

§ 301. (6) Patriotism in feeling and conduct is a sacred and a universal duty. The impulse to love our country is natural and strong. It is an enlargement and elevation of our love for home as the place around which gather the associations of infancy and childhood; of our familiarity with, and interest in, our neighbors, especially if these be definitely known and incorporated with the scenes and activities of our early life; of our intelligent appreciation of protection and security; of the enjoyment of liberty, and the security of person and property. It connects us with the past by all that is romantic in the heroic age of our sturdy ancestors, by all that is venerable in their struggles with nature and with hostile powers, with their aspirations after civil liberty, with the skill with which they laid the foundations of our subsequent prosperity and wealth, with the respect which they have won for us among the great national powers, and with our capacity for moral and intellectual achievements at home and

(6) Patriotism a positive duty and virtue.

among the nations of mankind. All this complex of emotions of the noblest and most elevated character is connected with the soil which our fathers planted, subdued, and defended, from which they and we have gained our wealth, which is filled with the monuments of their enterprise, and made sacred to us by the graves in which they were buried, and the homes in which they have enabled us to dwell in peace and security.

True patriotism is sensitive to national defects, and zealous for the moral welfare, the intellectual culture, the æsthetic grace, and the religious faith of one's fellow-citizens. It is most opposed to the blatant and declamatory spirit which so often bears its name, and caricatures its excellence, which in our country has done more than any thing besides to lead our citizens to forget that genuine patriotism is one of the most admirable of virtues, as it is one of the most sacred of duties.

§ 302. We pass next to the *political duties* of the citizen, or his duties as an administrator of the state. Thus far we have considered the duties which every individual owes to the state as a subject of its authority. Duties of this class, as we have noticed already, are frequently and properly distinguished as civil duties, or duties which the individual owes to the state as a citizen or subject. Speaking more exactly, we should say they are the duties which he owes to those of his fellow-men who are also his fellow-countrymen.

Duties of this class, like all duties to our fellow-men, are derived from the comprehensive law of love to all men, as limited and modified by the special relationships and affections which connect us with a common government and a common country.

We come now to those duties which are owed to us through the state by those who are in any sense its organs, or administrators of the government, and which every citizen owes to his fellow-men so far as he exercises any function of this kind.

Enumerated in part. These functionaries comprehend officers of the state, of every description, whether they be legislative, judicial, or executive. They also include electors or voters under

all governments which are more or less popular. Duties of this class are distinguished as political duties, for the reason that the subject of them is regarded as in so far, or in some sense, a member of the state when considered as a polity or organism, and as consequently in some sense an organ of the same.

The two classes of duties should by no means be confounded, as they often are, by those who fail to distinguish the rights which the citizen or subject may claim from his government, — e.g., to security and protection, and equal favors under the law, — from the right of the citizen to act as voter or an office-holder. No absurdity would seem to be so extreme as that which regards the right of voting or office-holding as one of the natural rights of a citizen. The doctrine that the offices of the state are a species of property to which every citizen has an equal claim or natural right, and still more emphatically the doctrine that the offices are the spoils of a victorious political party, is not only destitute of any rational authority, but is essentially immoral and demoralizing.

Civil and political duties often confounded.

§ 303. It may be well to repeat the truth, that the state is from its very nature an organism; that is, a society constituted for and maintained by certain functions, which it can only perform through certain organs.

The state necessarily an organism.

These organs are certain human beings, one or many, — necessarily very few in comparison with the entire population of even the smallest commonwealth, — to whom are intrusted these functions of authority, decision, and action in the name and for the well-being of the state. These duties are more or less distinctly defined by its constitutions and traditions. It is essential to the well-being of the state, that these duties should be performed with a certain exactness and fidelity. Such fidelity and exactness are required by the civil statute, and are enforced by the moral law. It is also required that many of these duties should be performed with moral earnestness and zeal, and with the highest personal enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. The law of

duty imperatively demands that functions which are so important in their consequences, which affect so many of our fellow-men, and which represent the will of so many human beings as an organized whole, should be performed with intelligence, with gravity, with exactness, with zeal, with energy, and at times with enthusiasm.

It follows that it is the duty of the lawmaker, whether one or many, to use the utmost intelligence in framing rules of action and methods of procedure. It is equally the duty of executors and judges to interpret these rules intelligently and uprightly, and enforce them impartially, without respect of persons, in a just and equitable spirit. The man who nominates or recommends or votes for another to an office, on his honor is bound to do it honestly and wisely, with a sincere reference to the end for which the office exists and ought to be administered.

Though every government is an organism, in that its agents are carefully distinguished, and their functions are more or less exactly defined, yet no government can exist or act of itself, by force of any automatic machinery, however skilfully devised, separately from the men who administer it. It supposes personal beings, who give it energy and effect by their wisdom, honesty, and tact; in short, by their personal and moral force. A state or commonwealth, when separated from the men by whom it is sustained and enforced, must necessarily become a dead and impotent thing. If the men who act as its organs do not animate their official doings with the spirit and dignity of public duty, and breathe into them the energy and zeal of love and sympathy for those whom they serve while they govern; if they do not at least dignify their official places and official acts with a decent self-respect, — the government fails of some of its most important consequences of good. Official insolence, perfunctory heartlessness, and self-consequence are the hideous or contemptible caricature of that authority which should be always associated with becoming dignity, even in its exactions and its penalties.

As such,
supposes per-
sonal organs.

If the state is confessedly and notoriously made the instrument of individual greed or of personal ambition or private favoritism, through the indifference or the selfishness of its officials, it is abused and perverted by its administrators, and must necessarily fail of its best effects. Inasmuch as civil government is always a necessity, it can never be an utter failure, unless it becomes a positive curse by causing more evil than good; that is, unless it is preparing the way for its destruction. But the evil of which it is incidentally the occasion may be incalculable, even when it maintains civil order, and secures and defends the rights of men to life, property, and personal liberty.

§ 304. Civil government must always be more than a machine, for the reason that it is administered by men who are personal, social, moral, and religious in their very nature, and for men who must be affected by the character and aims of those who make and execute their laws, and who can not and will not disconnect the spirit and manners of their officials from the legality or the useful effects of their doings. Hence it becomes a constant and imperative duty for every official personage not only to be faithful and efficient in the administration of his public trusts, but to administer such trusts emphatically in the spirit and aims of uprightness and benevolence. The New Testament is abundant in its inculcations of the moral obligation fully to satisfy the demands of the various relationships of life, particularly the social and political; but it constantly insists that these duties should be performed with a loving and earnest spirit, "as to the Lord, and not unto men."

The state
more than
a machine.

§ 305. It need scarcely be repeated, that our argument supposes what has already been said, that every civil office is a trust, and that the man who fails to administer it as such, and for the ends for which it is created, offends against the moral law. The heinousness of such an offence is proportioned to the importance of the trust, and the sensibility to its obligations which it is fitted to awaken. Such a failure

Every civil
office a trust.

may be merely technical or official, when it takes the form of simple neglect or oversight in respect to one's technical duties ; or it may be grossly criminal, as when an office is administered in an immoral spirit. In either case the two offences are alike moral, though not equally criminal.

§ 306. The sense of official responsibility in official or political

The sense of
official re-
sponsibility
in office-
holder and
voter.

life may be different in different countries ; and this difference may in part be owing to the difference in the dignity and the time of continuance of the offices, and in part to the moral habits and spirit of the people. The reflex influence of office-holding

and political responsibility upon the moral character and moral culture of the community is not inconsiderable. In a country in which the offices of administration are assumed for a long term of years or for a lifetime, and in which the responsibility is limited to a few individuals, in which also the superior officers are sternly held to a strict supervision over their subordinates, office-holding must necessarily and naturally be held to involve responsibilities which involve more or less distinctly moral relationships and a high sense of personal character. In a popular government, if the political offices are held to be the natural and legitimate prizes for party services, which are enjoyed for a brief period, it is not so natural and easy to maintain a high sense of moral obligation, either in the office-holder, or in the voter who has the office in his gift. We couple the voter with the government official ; because, in principle and effect, every voter is an organ and trustee of the state, and, consequently, a government official and administrator. Whether he vote directly or indirectly for the office-holder, he is himself one of the administrators of the government, and comes under all the responsibilities of an official. In such a government, the language everywhere current would seem to sanction and enforce the doctrine that the people are directly and solely responsible for the character and acts of their officials, and are therefore, in their political functions, directly responsible

to the moral law. But the practical effect of the system is that the people regard themselves as responsible to nobody except to their party leaders. The practical inference is too often, that, inasmuch as the people are the government, the officials whom they elect are regarded as their organs only as they are their servants, the mouthpieces through whom they speak their will, — organs, not in the sense that they have any special functions to perform, but simply as pieces of mechanism who are to move as they are bidden.

The consequence follows, that the sense of moral obligation for what is supposed to be taken as the people's will is diffused among so many, that no one feels it to rest heavily upon himself. Next, the officers are changed so frequently, that, while responsibility for direct and open pecuniary defalcation to the public may be successfully enforced, responsibility cannot be so easily enforced for personal fidelity in many other important forms of political duty. What is worst of all in its moral influence is the doctrine that lawmakers and the law-administrator are the servants, not of the people, but of a portion of the people, — the political party who elected them, — and are bound to be the obedient servants of their imperious will ; in other words, that duties to one's party displace and override duties to one's country, to one's self, and to God. These tendencies become still more demoralizing when the doctrine is accepted, — and it is of little import whether theoretically or practically — that the prime function of the holder of a high place in the gift of his party is to distribute to the servants of that party whatever offices he may be so fortunate or so unscrupulous as to secure for them.

§ 307. Perhaps no contrast is so striking as that between the estimates of the sacredness of the state, and of the moral relations of the servants of the state, The ancient and modern state. which prevailed in the ancient, and that which is taught in certain well-known modern, schools. Among the ancient political philosophers, the state was a sacred institution, cherished and defended by the celestial powers, who were its defenders and its pride. The boundary of one's country was the horizon-line which included all the human beings to whom any obligations were acknowledged, except certain general duties of sympathy and friendship growing out of a com-

mon descent and religion. Within this line was the sacred commonwealth, which included all those fellow-beings whom the citizen or the man was bound to love and care for. To all these he was bound by the most sacred obligations; and his duties to them, and the state which encircled them, and the gods who protected them, were sacred and supreme. If in this conception we find an exaggeration of the truth that the state is a social organism which is natural and necessary to man, and therefore always a sacred institution, it is equally true that the modern theory of the state, as an association which is founded on self-interest, and limited to the security of life, property, and personal freedom, is a more offensive exaggeration, if it be not a caricature, of the truth that looks in the opposite direction. The truth that includes them both is, that, while the state accepts the law of love which binds together the moral universe, its special, but by no means its exclusive, function is the defence of its own citizens in the possession and security of their individual rights. If it be true, as we have sought to show, that the rights of men in the final analysis are resolved into and enforced by the duties which love enforces, the state itself rests for its authority on the same force,—the force which holds the moral universe in eternal harmony, and includes and expresses by a single word all the moral perfections of God.

III.

CHAPTER XVII.

DUTIES TO ANIMALS.

§ 308. It cannot be doubted that we owe duties to animals, or that these duties are numerous and important.

Animals are sentient beings, and many of them are dependent on man for their enjoyment and well-being both directly and remotely. So far as man can add to this enjoyment, even with labor or loss or suffering to himself or to others, it seems evident, at first thought, that he ought to do so. Every benevolent human being is impelled to do this; and therefore, whenever this is possible, and there is no reason to the contrary, it becomes his duty. Every natural impulse which is the natural consequence of the benevolent will is morally good. To feed an animal that is starving, to release an animal which has fallen into a pit or a thicket, to help an animal in any extremity of suffering, whether from pain or terror, is a necessity to every good man, and therefore is a duty for every man, unless the claim of some other being conflicts with or overcomes this impulse. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast."

Reasons
which en-
force these
duties.

"He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

COLERIDGE.

Animals are also social. Whether good or evil comes to them from society with man or with their kind, to increase their enjoyment and to diminish their suffering from this source also becomes a duty. Whatever may be this good or evil, man is bound by the law of love to add to the one and to diminish the other.

Animals are also capable of being trained by man to enhanced enjoyment. Consequently, it becomes the duty of man, so far as this is true, and no counter claims interfere, to develop and train the powers and enlarge the range of the enjoyments of those animals that come into close and frequent intercourse with himself. There is abundant evidence, moreover, that many animals are capable of a social happiness which is greatly enhanced and refined through their associations with man and his activities and sports. We need only name the dog, the cat, the horse, the ox, the cow, the sheep, not a few of the feathered tribe, and also the monkey. These enter more or less completely into special pleasures by their intimate intercourse with man. They become more sagacious in their judgments, more sensitive in their feelings, and widened in the number and refinement of their sorrows and joys. As man learns to know them more intimately, he also becomes more sensitive to the indications of joy and sorrow which they furnish, and more impelled to further the one, and mitigate the other. In consequence, the duties of men to the animals with whom they become closely connected are largely increased, and in proportion are less easily evaded or denied.

The moral discipline to gentleness and patience and self-denial which is sometimes wrought by his dog or his horse in an otherwise morose and selfish and brutal master is not infrequently noticeable and effective. Contrariwise, the hidden brutality or selfishness which is sometimes wreaked upon one of the pets of the household by an otherwise decorous and well-bred man or woman has an important moral significance as a manifestation of unfeeling

selfishness. If man owes these duties so far as animals themselves are concerned, and especially those which are intimately associated with man, their claims upon us are in some respects similar to those which may be urged by our fellow-men.

But though these claims are similar, they are still greatly unlike in the responses of duty which they evoke, as well as far more limited in their reach. Animals cannot urge their claims upon man as rights, for the reason that they cannot enforce them by the appeal to our consciences, that we know that they know that these acts are duties from us to them. Our duties to them are, in two particulars only, similar to those which we owe to our fellow-men. We are bound to supply their wants, and to perfect their powers; but only in an imperfect sense are we bound to accord their rights. In the special and completed sense of the term, they have no rights; for the reason that they are not moral, having no sense of what is due to themselves, and no capacity to appeal to the consciences of others. The claims which they make, or seem to make, are accompanied by no conscious and fervid appeal on their part to our sense of duty, or by any conviction on their part that we ought to give them what they ask for. Hence the moral weakness of their appeals, which is imperfectly supplied by the utmost of the passionate rage and brute fury with which they sometimes turn upon the men who cross their wishes, or disappoint their expectations.

**Animals
neither
personal
nor moral.**

Next to the duty to supply the wants of dependent animals is the special duty of wisely training, so far as we may, the animals which are in any sense committed to our care. That this is a duty to the animals themselves, is obvious from their capacity to be educated by such training, and to gain more or less enjoyment from the discipline which follows. Few men are aware how wide and various are the opportunities, and how imperative is the duty, to enhance the enjoyment of the animals with which they are associated, by means of wise and judicious and patient training.

**Duty of
training
animals.**

The domestic animals of a household which is controlled by a spirit of order and kindness in this particular seem almost to belong to another species than those of a family in which conscience or skill in this service is absent. It would almost seem as though the horses and herds and fowls of the one came from a different stock as compared with those of the other, especially if the discipline of gentleness and method has been tried from the birth of the animals in question, and been reinforced by physiological heredity. That men need to be awakened to a sense of their defects and opportunities in respect to this class of duties, is obvious. That, when they are aroused to any just estimate of both, and are quickened to heed the suggestions of wisdom and the voice of conscience, the animals which haunt the houses and are seen in the streets of men will be in a sense transformed by sympathy with their masters, cannot be doubted.

§ 309. We are to remember, however, that animals occupy a place which is subordinate to man in the economy of nature, and the purposes and plans of the Creator. For this reason man not only may, but he ought, to use animals as his servants, and the instruments to his necessities and his enjoyments. We have already adverted to the fact that animals have no moral or rational personality, and consequently have no such sense of personal rights as can be enforced by an appeal to the consciences of the human beings with whom they hold their intercourse of affection and obedience. Their subordinate position in the universe is obvious to any one who believes in such an economy, whether or not he finds in it the manifestation of the will and purpose of God, or whether he resorts to one or the other or to both for the regulation and justification of his conduct. If he does not derive his authority to use animals from this source, he must rest his claim upon his own superior strength and skill. When he asks himself, By what consideration can I justify myself in yoking an animal to the plough, in killing him for

The place of animals is subordinate to that of man.

food, in destroying a bird or beast of prey, in taking him for sport, or in subjecting him to the experiments of science? he can give no other reason than this: that such are the intentions of nature, or such is the will of its wise Ruler.

Man is first driven by necessity and fear to defend himself against the strength and fury of beasts of prey. He next learns to capture them by his skill. Next he uses the flesh of fish and fowl and game; he learns to rejoice in the excitement of the chase; he avails himself of their strength; and, finally, he experiments upon their life and health, that he may prolong and save his own. Impulse first inclines him to each of these modes of dealing with animals. Reflection and conscience justify him in each and all, and whatever they involve in his tastes and habits, in his expenditures, his institutions, and even in his literature.

§ 310. (1) Man is justified in taking the life of beasts and birds of prey, whether they endanger his life, or destroy his property, or interfere with his reasonable enjoyments. In some cases, the question which arises between the man and the animal is, whether the man or the beast shall live. If the man does not kill the animal, the animal will destroy the man. The impulse to self-defence is sure to prevail, and it is reasonable and right that it should. The interest to save his own life is so active, so intense and pre-occupying, and withal so consonant to reason, as to require no formal justification before the conscience of man. As the struggle for existence becomes less frequent and less energetic, man finds other satisfying reasons for continuing this warfare in the reflection that the life of man, as an individual and as a race, is of higher worth in the esteem of reason and the consent of God, than the continuance of the rattlesnake, the tiger, or the hyena, either as an individual or a species. More profound knowledge of the intentions of nature would suggest and confirm the conclusion that the struggle with animal life is most useful and most necessary for the well-being of man in training him to

(1) Beasts
and birds
of prey.

a higher type of manhood, and was designed to terminate with the practical extinction of the more savage animals, at least on the land.

§ 311. (2) Closely connected with the necessary strife with beasts of prey, is the killing of animals for food. But what right has the reasoning and more skilful animal to destroy another animal in order to feed on his flesh? He is not compelled to do this in order to save his own life. Vegetable food abounds, and may be indefinitely increased in quantity, and improved in quality. If it is not more healthful, it is certainly equally conducive to health and life. Milk and eggs supply all the animal nutriment which can be absolutely required. The vegetarians reason after this fashion, when they contend, that, for man to take the life of an animal to sustain his own, is an offence against the law of love, and, in a sense, a violation of the animal's rights.

The only satisfying reply to this argument is to be found in the manifest arrangements and intentions of nature and of God, which indicate, if they do not demonstrate, that unless the lives of animals were shortened for the sustenance of man, and were their increase unregulated by man, man would find no place in the earth for himself, because he would be crowded out of being for want of both food and standing-place; both of which would be appropriated by the harmless domestic animal, unless, indeed, the beasts of prey should first destroy both man and his domestic friends.

Let this be as it may, the consideration which decides the question of duty is this: Man is fond of animal food, and thrives upon it in those zones and climates in which he uses it; and there is no special sacredness in the life of an animal as indicated in the arrangements of nature, except so far as the animal is intimately associated with human society. As between animals, it is the law of nature, that one animal should feed upon another, from the lowest up to the highest. Physiology has demonstrated, at least, that vegetable materials, when

converted into animal flesh, are prepared to be re-digested by man. Man prefers animal food as a part of his sustenance in those countries in which he seems to require it. Every person seems to favor its use, and there is no decisive reason against it. For these reasons, we conclude that it is always morally right, and it may sometimes be the duty of man, to use flesh for food.

§ 312. (3) Man is justified in using the strength of the animal to supplement or take the place of his own. He mounts the horse or the camel, and spares himself the fatigue of walking or of carrying heavy burdens. (3) The use of animal strength.

By their service, also, he makes rapid journeys. He contrives rude vehicles, in which he compels the horse, the ox, and the elephant to drag him and his burdens. He invents rude machinery, which he first propels himself, and then impels by the power of the horse; and, finally, measures the capacity of other agents by the animal which was first employed the most conspicuously in this kind of service. Had the horse been unemployed in these useful services, man himself would either have been overcome by nature, or the resources of nature in agriculture and commerce, which have been so variously developed by the use of animal strength and mechanical appliances, would have been slowly discovered and applied. The beneficial results of animal service amply justify the employment of the means which have contributed to their production. The actual effects of the use of animal power in the past, and its possible and probable effects in the future, indicate, or rather illustrate, — if, indeed, they do not demonstrate, — that this subjection of the animal to the interests of man is in principle not only consistent with, but justified by, the law of duty.

§ 313. (4) We use animals for sport. We not only kill them for food; but we add to the value of what we take, the heightened interest which attends our skill and exhilaration in their capture and death. We not only destroy the fish, the wild game, and the beasts of prey which (4) Use of animals for sport.

are the pests of the farmer ; but we take a special delight in the skill and arts which are required in taking and destroying them. We even breed and preserve animals of many sorts for the very purpose of hunting them. We train dogs and other animal helpers for the simple service of giving zest and success to our sport. Is sporting in these various forms morally justifiable? In relation to this question, moralists differ ; some holding with the greatest earnestness that it involves needless waste and gratuitous cruelty, and others that it may be morally salutary.

In discussing this question, it is no more than fair that the sportsman should plead his own cause. The genuine sportsman urges that the man who derives the keenest satisfaction from sporting proper will be the loudest and most positive to condemn the waste of animal life which is not infrequently allowed by men who call themselves huntsmen and fishermen. His habits and tastes combine with his regard for the interest and the honor of the craft, to discourage and condemn cruelty of every description. The incidental advantages of health, self-reliance, and courage, which attend fishing and hunting of every sort, are not inconsiderable. That many excesses and immoralities attend the abuses of this animating and exhilarating life, may be conceded, while yet it remains true that its enjoyments are legitimate, and its advantages are manifold. Men of the most elevated moral characters, whose tastes have been trained in this direction, have indulged these tastes with a good conscience and the favoring judgment of the best of their fellow-men.

§ 314. (5) Animals are subjected to physiological and pathological experiments, some of which are painful, and many long-continued, for the sake of discoveries in respect to the conditions of life and health, of disease and its cure. These experiments have not been unknown for many generations. It is within recent years, however, that they have been renewed upon an extensive scale, and been used with the greatest freedom. They have been

(5) Use of
animals
in physiol-
ogy and
pathology.

applied to every part and organ of the body; and in every form of drug and lesion, of disturbance of function and of torture, have sometimes been continued for days and weeks. The excesses in the number of trials, the unfeeling disregard of the suffering involved, the repetition of experiments to gratify the idle curiosity of the inquirer, or to display the dexterity of the operator, have aroused in many circles an intense and protracted opposition to the practice, and caused it to be condemned as wholly unjustifiable, and denounced in the severest terms. Not a few persons in Europe and America, whose judgments are ordinarily candid and just, have pronounced vivisection to be criminally immoral.

This unqualified condemnation cannot be sustained. If animals can be lawfully used for food, their life and comfort may be sacrificed in the interest of the art of healing. This proposition would seem to be self-evident. Whether experiments of vivisection are necessary in the service of pathological or therapeutic science, may be questioned by some. There are few who know any thing of the questions which modern physiology seeks to answer, or the problems which pathology proposes to itself, and who understand how varied and important are the services which vivisection can render to both, who will question that vivisection to a certain extent is not only justifiable but is humane. It is equally evident, that when it is needless it is immoral in the extreme. Nor is its use limited to experiments for discovery, as some contend. It may be employed as rightfully in the illustration of medical science. Enforcement and illustration may be as essential, and require vivisection as truly, for the pupil, as investigation did for the discoverer. Even when it has become needless for discovery, it may yet be needful for illustration and enforcement: when it is no longer required for the accomplished master of science, it may yet be most useful for his pupil.

It remains true, however, that indifference and barbarity in feeling or in act, with respect to the sufferings of the animals

which are subjected to scientific researches, are grossly immoral. They are specially inexcusable when anæsthetic applications are so effective, and so generally do not interfere with the success of many otherwise cruel and even revolting experiments. It may be said with little qualification, that to use vivisection in teaching, or experimenting before a public audience, or a lecture-room class, can rarely be justified ; and the employment of it should be condemned. The discovery of anæsthetics, very nearly at the time when this new field of research was opened to investigation, would almost seem to be a protest of a merciful Providence against every species of immoral cruelty under the fair name of scientific experimentation on the part of the students of the diseases of men, and their remedies.

IV.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DUTIES WHICH RESPECT THE PHYSICAL WORLD.

§ 315. THAT man owes some duties to the material world, is obvious. He can discover its resources, and apply These duties are twofold. them to the use and enjoyment of man. He can also interpret the significance of nature as a revelation of spiritual and ethical truth.

(1) It is the duty of man to discover and apply the resources of the material world for the use and enjoyment of mankind. In the judgment of many, and at first thought, perhaps, in the judgment of all men, this comprehensive class of duties would be placed among those which man owes to himself, his fellow-men, and his Creator. That is, it would be urged that man ought to study and master nature, in order to use his power over her resources, and his knowledge of her secrets, in one of these three applications. Nature, it is urged, is nothing, except as the servant or companion of man. For the reasons already given, however (§ 151), we assign these duties to a separate class. The natural impulses of man also impel him to these activities with respect to the material universe. He is incited by curiosity to discover its properties. He is impelled to gain a profounder insight into the laws which govern its workings. His invention is challenged to devise the means and instruments by which he can gratify the desires which his discoveries and

(1) To discover and apply the resources of nature.

devices will enable him to satisfy. His successes in the past animate and stimulate his faith in what he can do in the future. Whether he interprets the various indications which he meets as the intimations of nature, or the revelations of God, he finds these impulses to be sanctioned by conscience. If there is any comprehensive duty which is written upon the earth and upon the sky in unmistakable characters, it is the duty to study the secrets of nature for the benefit and delight of man and the glory of God. Nor need we separate the interest of knowledge from the interest of useful application. Utility in the largest sense belongs to every result which affects man's well-being. Simply to know, whether we know facts or principles, gratifies and elevates man; to invent and interpret, gives him a special and noble satisfaction; to apply our knowledge to ends which directly concern man's enjoyment, or train him to purer affections and a worthier life, are all motives which incite us to master the secrets and control the resources of nature.

We cannot here distinguish the practical and the scientific knowledge of nature. If the one is obligatory, so is the other. We may not say that the knowledge which can be used in common life is obligatory, while that which admits of no immediate application is of questionable authority, and perhaps is a waste of time or a perversion of the powers. Such a distinction cannot be maintained; for the reason that we never can be certain that any knowledge is useless, least of all any knowledge which concerns the world of matter or its secrets. The prosecution of the science of nature, when regarded from this light, becomes a duty. No limit can be prescribed to activities of this sort, especially since many of the remotest and most recondite facts and truths have been found to render the most important service to man.

Pleasures
from nature
legitimate.

The pleasures which attend the knowledge of nature, the consciousness of insight and of power which it gives, and the ethical lessons and habits which it

imparts, enforce the acquisition of this knowledge as a duty upon every man to whom it is possible. The duty applies to every kind and degree of knowledge, from the most elementary to the most recondite. It also applies to all persons by whom such knowledge is attainable. No man or woman or child should remain ignorant of any fact or truth of nature which can be acquired in consistency with the claims of other duties. Nature is a book, ever open to all, which no one may neglect or refuse to read. To refuse is to rob one's self of conscious insight and power. It is also to limit one's power to instruct and enlighten others. It is to be ungrateful and unjust in the use of one's powers and opportunities.

It is also, if possible, more positively our duty to develop and manifest those material resources and appli-
 The enlarge-
 ment and
 development
 of her
 resources.
 cations which contribute directly to our own happiness and that of our fellow-men. A field which is so enriched and cultivated as to produce a luxuriant crop, a lawn which is always smooth and always green, a farm that is well fenced, and glows with rich and varied harvests, a grove in which every tree betokens the care of a master, a garden which is his perpetual delight, are oftentimes the brilliant exemplifications and products of conscientious devotion to duty, which has spared neither time nor patience nor labor. It is not extravagant to say, that, as men become morally better, the garden of the sluggard, the lazy, the shiftless, and the drunkard, will be more rare than at present; that the aspect of nature will shine wherever the foot of man shall tread upon it; and the earth in its beauty will reflect the joy which grateful and conscientious serenity shall spread upon its surface. The noblest and most inspiring representations of the future perfection of man, in all moral and spiritual achievements, are fitly symbolized, by the Hebrew prophets, by the transformations of the face of nature as an effect of his skill and art on the one hand, and in sympathy with his improved character on the other.

Indolence, sensuality, passion, and pride do not always deform and deface nature, but they often do. Self-control and temperance and industry do not always inspire to science, or manifest themselves in the triumphs of science or the achievements of art; but they tend in this direction. They certainly remove the most serious obstacles that stand in the way of the more rapid achievements of man in unveiling the secrets of the physical universe, and applying them for the welfare of man.

§ 316. (2) But nature is more than a storehouse of the wealth which man's insight can discover. The physical universe is even more than a system of forces and a revealer of laws, which give the intellect insight and power. Nature addresses the feelings, and quickens the imagination, and enforces lessons of duty, and reveals God to the reason and the conscience. How this is done, cannot easily be explained. The processes may defy our analysis, and yet we may be certain of the results. It cannot be denied that these effects have been wrought upon many who have studied the aspects of nature with the most curious and attentive application, and endeavored to apply the lessons which nature suggests to their moral sensibilities, and the aspirations that reach after a nobler life. The most illiterate and untaught have sometimes shown themselves sensitively receptive of these impressions. The most accomplished students of nature, in her scientific aspects, have often been the most open to these higher influences. We infer that it is the duty of every man to open his mind and heart to all these suggestions, and to gain from them the lessons and impressions which nature has in her gift for every man who will listen and learn. The poetic and spiritual interpretation of nature may become man's noblest occupation and highest joy, and hence it is enforced as his constant duty in every form in which it may be achieved.

(2) Nature
manifests
God to the
imagination
and the
conscience.

V.

CHAPTER XIX.

DUTIES TO GOD.

§ 317. As the ground of these duties, we assume that God exists, and is knowable by man; that he is a personal Being, with personal sympathies and affections; that he is moral in his character and actions; that he is also a moral ruler; that he is forgiving and redeeming towards men in their sins and weakness; and that in all these relations he is morally perfect. This comprehensive view may be called the view of natural theism, as interpreted by moral science. Christian theism goes farther, and teaches that he has made his character and administration manifest and effective with man by the life and death of Jesus the Christ, as is recorded in the Christian history and is believed in the Christian Church; and that he is also present by his Providence and Spirit in the affairs of men. These truths, of both natural and Christian theism, we accept as unquestioned, as the basis of our views of man's duties to God. If they are questioned, they must be proved in other treatises than this.

We are concerned only with those principles and rules of duty which are fairly derived and deduced from these motives, as applied to the moral nature of man. These truths being given, they involve certain permanent relationships to man on the part of God, and certain sentiments and affections toward God on the part of man, both of which are the foundation of his religious duties.

**Grounds of
these duties.**

**These truths
involve cer-
tain duties.**

It will be remembered that morality has to do with the affections, only so far as they are voluntary, and affect the actions, habits, and character; that it does not propose to originate, but only to regulate, the natural groundwork which it finds man to possess. These impulses and affections it allows or represses: it increases or relaxes their energy, and thus matures them into voluntary habits by the repetition of positive efforts or resisting conflicts.

§ 318. We find, then, that man is capable of certain natural affections towards the Supreme Being. These we may call the *theopathic affections*. Whether the original capacity in man for such affections is distinguishable from kindred sensibilities which connect him with his fellow-men, it is not necessary to inquire. It is obvious that their existence and activity are independent of man's will, and that as natural sentiments they have no moral quality. As natural sensibilities, they also differ in their positive and relative energy. It is only as natural reverence, gratitude, worship, hope, and trust are modified by the character and will, that they can have moral significance or worth. Not only is the relative strength of these affections seriously affected by the re-acting influences which proceed from the will and the indulgence of them in sentiment and impulse; but as single affections they may, by disuse, be dwarfed into the poverty and limitations of merely rudimentary organs. As the eye, the hand, and the foot, or some of the vital organs, by neglect or perversion may become dwarfed and inert, so may it be with the natural religious affections. The natural capacities of some men for religious reverence, trust, hope, and desire, seem to shrink into nothingness, and almost wholly to die out. On the other hand, under the stimulating warmth and light of an unselfish will, the germs of natural religious feeling may kindle into the ardors of intense emotion. We may trace the influence of religious faith, in its influence upon the feelings and character, by several suppositions.

§ 319. (1) We will first suppose God to be recognized simply as self-existent and absolute, and as such to be an object of wonder and worship.

First supposition: God as absolute and self-existent.

In whatever way man comes to the knowledge of God, and on whatever ground he believes God to exist, he certainly possesses capacities for this reverence and worship. Whether God be personal or impersonal, whether he be the Absolute or the Infinite, he is in some sense self-existent and independent, and as such is recognized as a mystery which must give us pause, and excite to wonder, and exact of us responsive homage. The sublimity and incomprehensibleness of the relations involved in the existence of such a being, whether contemplated as an ideal or accepted as a fact, must stimulate and exalt the imagination. Even the limited universe is vast and complicated enough to elevate and fill the mind, and move and awe the emotions. How much more does the conception of an unknown beyond subdue while it exalts the emotions of natural or "kosmical worship"! If this unknown is accepted as also the unknowable, the response of dazed reverence that is blinded by excess of light is still more positive. If the self-existent Absolute is held to be more, and is accepted as a Person with personal intelligence and personal affections, the mystery inseparable from the dark background of impersonality is heightened and deepened by the emergence of the relations in which the living and personal God presents himself to the faith of man, who is himself a person, and the communion of his conscious adoration. In whichever of these characters God is believed by man, he must exact from him more or less of the homage of natural worship.

We may arrest our constructive course at this point, and ask how far is this natural worship, in any or all of its forms, a matter of moral obligation. We reply, man is bound to exercise these emotions in kind and degree and frequency so far as they would be the natural products of a character controlled by a righteous will. To a

Natural worship morally obligatory.

right-hearted man, thoughts of God must be always suggested, inasmuch as every event manifests his presence and agency. The emotions of worship in the forms of reverence and adoration would be constant and fervent. These affections, and the actions which would express them, would include all the duties to which a man would be impelled by the religious faith which we have conceived. The religious defects and sins of which such a man could be guilty would be the infrequent recognition of God, such as selfishness or passion would involve, and the consequent feeble activity of his religious affections, and the dwarfing of the capacities for their exercise.

§ 320. (2) Let us next assume or suppose, that God is endowed with moral perfections; i.e., that he is a personal Being who is perfectly good. Towards such a Being, the capacities of natural feeling on the part of man would be proportionately diversified and enlarged. Whether our own characters were morally good or evil, we should naturally respect and honor a perfect example of goodness in God. Such homage is inseparable from the existence of conscience in ourselves, which involves honor to moral perfection in others, most of all in God, so far as we recognize its authority over ourselves. To the natural wonder and worship of God as self-existent and supreme, and the sympathetic reverence for him as personal, conscience would add a reverent awe for his spotless holiness, and the desire to imitate his perfection. If natural worship must, as we have seen, take on an ethical type, even though its subject were merely a self-existent Absolute, or a sympathetic natural Person, much more must it become intensely ethical so soon as the object of our worship is recognized as the heavenly Father. An intense moral sympathy and affection always exist between two moral persons who have the same moral ideal. It must necessarily be intensified between two beings bound by the ties of Creator and creature, of Father in heaven and child on earth. The law of love, so far as it is honored and obeyed, would of itself suggest the

(2) **Second
supposition:**
**God morally
perfect.**

precept, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

(3) To the attributes already supposed, we may add those of a moral Ruler. Personality, in its completeness, implies moral law and moral character in the in-

Third supposition: That God is also a moral Ruler.

most relations, whether the person be man or God. Moral personality, in either, also implies moral authority and rule with respect to other persons. The moral law requires, not only that the individual should himself be morally perfect, but that he should exercise his personal influence to induce others to be perfect like himself. This he can only do, as he manifests his complacency and dislike towards them according to their obedience or non-obedience to the moral rule which he accepts as supreme for himself. To the exercise of this influence, each man is impelled by the force of his own moral feelings. These impulses are sanctioned by the beneficent results that are known to follow the restraints and excitements of a wise government for moral ends. Moral government is, in fact, found everywhere, where there are moral persons, — in every society, in the family, the state, even in communities that are partially organized and short-lived. It is universally acknowledged to be not only salutary, but necessary. The natural supremacy of God exalts him to the throne of the universe by the authority of natural and moral fitness. He is acknowledged as the rightful Ruler, by the spontaneous assent and unanimous consent of the good, and the convicted consciences of the bad.

Two objections are urged against the legitimacy of moral rule as an agency of moral influence: —

(1) It is contended, that the influence of authority is mercenary, and therefore inferior in quality, even if not inconsistent with those motives which are drawn from the excellence of virtue and the odiousness of vice. Virtue, it is urged, should attract by its own charms, and vice repel by its own offensiveness.

Two objections against moral rule in God.
(1) It is mercenary.

It is essential to our love or hatred of either, that we should

love them for their own sake, and not at all for the sake of the friendship or favor of other persons towards ourselves. So soon as we love goodness because God will love us if we do, or hate vice because we dread his displeasure, we, in effect, cease to love or hate either.

To this objection we oppose the reply : When we love virtue or hate vice for its own sake, we are not, and cannot be, indifferent to our own favor or condemnation. If we are not controlled by these affections, we are at least moved by the reward or punishment which comes from within ourselves. So long as man is a law to himself, he is an awarder to himself of reward and punishment within. When he adds the consenting judgment and sympathy of others to his own self-reward or self-condemnation, no weakening or divisions of the highest motives are conceivable. Two impulses, both laudable, are used in place of one,—the will of the personal conscience, and the coinciding will of the personal God.

(2) It is objected, that moral rule supposes punishment, which always is an intrusive and odious instrumentality, and as such is inconsistent with the personal independence of the moral subject. But punishment, or the displeasure of others, does not await the good, but only the bad, who are hostile to the common weal, and deserve the evil which they suffer. The use of punishment, when just, cannot possibly involve so much evil as the absence of punishment, with the rampant attitude which moral evil assumes when unrestrained. The moral energy of punishment, it should always be remembered, does not consist in the sensible good or evil which it promotes or threatens, but in what punishment expresses of the person who inflicts it. This favor or displeasure no good man has a right to withhold, or should care to restrain. Coinciding, as it always must, with the self-complacency or remorse of the individual himself, it enforces both by his sensitive sympathy with similar feelings on the part of Him whose personality reasonably sways all

(2) Objection
that it
implies
punishment.

persons who bear his image, and who is greater than our hearts.

§ 321. If these principles are sound, then it follows that every man is bound to accept God as his own moral Ruler, and to recognize his personal will as a motive to his character and conduct. It is almost trivial, and yet it may be important, to say, that he is as truly bound to acknowledge himself a loyal subject of the kingdom of God, as he is to confess and demean himself a loyal citizen of the civil state. The motives derived from the authority of God are needed by every man. Their influence exalts and strengthens, rather than humiliates and weakens, the character. The consequences of distinctly acknowledging this relationship in our theories of public and private duty are wide-reaching and most important.

**Conclusion :
Duty of every
man.**

Practically, an intelligent and cordial submission to God as our moral Ruler must affect the principles, the feelings, and the conduct. The natural and personal reverence for God, which we have recognized as common to all men, becomes under its influence a righteous fear to offend against God's rightful authority. Our natural reverence for God rises into a sentiment which is hallowed by moral awe. Our sorrow for the degradation and folly of our moral failures becomes a personal confession of personal sins. In short, every natural duty and affection towards the Creator and Father of our spirits is ennobled by the recognition of God as our rightful moral Sovereign.

**Influence
of the moral
recognition
of God.**

§ 322. (4) God may also be known as a forgiving God and a Redeemer to man as sinful and morally weak. These aspects of his character and administration open the way for the special and eminently personal affections of gratitude, confidence, and hope. Repentance and a better life must always be enforced by the authority of conscience and the moral law, whether there is or is not help and hope from God. Man can never be excused from duty, what-

**Fourth
supposition :
God forgiv-
ing and
redeeming.**

ever the past may have been. He can never excuse himself, whether or not he can be forgiven and admitted to the favor of God. So soon, however, as he can be forgiven, and the restoration of moral strength becomes possible by the favor of God, then hope and courage and gratitude become duties, which should be cherished as the impulses to a new and restored moral life.

§ 323. The fact of sin as ill-deserving, and tending to weakness and corruption, and man's consequent need of forgiveness and help, is more or less distinctly recognized in all positive religions. Most if not all these religions promise forgiveness and help on some conditions. The fact that those religions are distorted by superstitions, and perverted to immoral and debasing excesses, may serve to show that the convictions of men, in respect to their needs, are well founded; that they need forgiveness and help, as well as the assurance of both, to meet their profoundest wants and fears. The theism of the Scriptures, as it is completed in the New Testament, is not more unique for its representations of God, and his communications to man, than it is for the emotions and duties which these truths inspire and enjoin. In the complete adaptation of both to meet man's deepest and most permanent needs, we find the most decisive evidence of their objective and subjective truth.

§ 324. We gather these separate inferences into the comprehensive formula: Every form of religious duty is enforced by the conscience so far, and so far only, as the obligation to perform it is a natural and necessary inference from whatever is accepted as religious truth. Religious duty is in its nature more sacred than duty in any other form, because the influences of religious motives and forces are more needed, and are more effective, than those which enforce duties of any other description. God is nearer to man than any other person can be. He touches man more constantly, and at points of contact to which no other being

**Sin and
ill-desert
universally
recognized.**

**Comprehen-
sive conclu-
sion.**

can have access. He commands a reverence which by divine right takes precedence of every other species of worship. He exacts a gratitude which no other benefactor can claim. He enforces personal loyalty and obedience such as no other ruler calls forth. He requires repentance with an emphasis which no other offended father and sovereign can possibly assert; and he manifests a patience under neglect and ingratitude, which no other injured being can be conceived to exemplify. The mute patience of the living and loving Father of men, which is manifest in nature, is consummated in the life and death of Him who was "the brightness of the Father's glory." In all these methods and arguments, does God make his appeal to the conscience; and to each of these appeals does conscience respond. It follows that the man who obeys conscience, and loves duty, must in his heart love and obey God.

§ 325. These principles explain the relations of morality to religion. They enable us to see that morality furnishes the criteria by which to try and judge religion in its objective principles and its practical spirit.

**Relations of
morality to
religion.**

They dissipate the notion, that, while religion in some form is a necessity, any one of its forms is as good as another; the form in which each generation shapes and utters its conceptions of the divine, and expresses its aspirations, being the best fitted to its wants. Those who adopt this theory urge the following: Each people and race must form some ideas of the Unseen, which are imaged in temple and statue and shrine, and before which each presents its ritual of sacrifice or offering, of prayer or song. Whatever either may be, each one meets the wants and expresses the culture of the worshippers; except that every religion in a sense elevates the people who accept it, lifting them up to a higher stage, and contributing its impulse to human progress. Therefore one religion is as good as another; or, rather, the religion which any people may conceive or frame is the best and only religion that is possible for their needs.

There is sufficient truth in these statements to make them plausible: there are also in them a very serious oversight and error. While it is true that no religion can continue to exist which does not appeal to the conscience, and has not some moral pretext or plausibility, it is also true that religion can become one of the most effective agents for the corruption of the conscience and the degradation of the life. Hence, so far is it from being true that one religion is as good as another, or that religion in any form is a necessary force for good, that it may, and often does, become a potent instrument for evil. Even the purest and truest religion, so soon as it is separated from the conscience in its practical working, may become one of the most effective agents of demoralization. Christianity itself, even in its purest forms, and under the most sedulous care, has been constantly liable to perversion and abuse in the form of doctrinal or ethical misconception. It would seem as though the most elevating of all agencies in its nature could become the most debasing in its actual working. Hence the force and the need of the practical test of creeds and ritual and disciples, so wisely provided and so unsparingly enforced by its Founder: "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

It follows also, that morality, in the deeper and the profounder meaning of the word, is *necessary to give to religion its truth and its worth.*

It is equally true, on the other hand, that *religion gives to morality its life.* Hence morality cannot dispense with religion, but needs religion to enforce and animate its commands and inspiration. The personal motives which religion furnishes must be superadded to the motives of conscience, to render them energetic and effective. The experience of individuals and the history of the race confirm the truth, that, while morality is required to elevate and direct religion, religion is equally necessary to give force and effect to morality.

CHAPTER XX.

SPECIAL RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

§ 326. It has already been explained, that, while morality begins with the purposes and dispositions as voluntary acts and states, it does not end with either, but reaches forward to the feelings and external actions. This is pre-eminently true of religious duties, inasmuch as religion is the last and noblest outcome, as well as the inmost spring and manifestation, of a right moral character.

The first and most comprehensive of religious duties is to possess a religious character, such as is justified and required by the conscience. No duty can be truly moral which does not spring from the character. No character can be morally right which does not consciously or unconsciously recognize religious motives, and impel to religious duties. It is conceivable that a man should be good at heart, whose religious faith is neither definite nor settled. Education, pre-occupations, prejudices, and ignorance may hinder or embarrass the development of the religious emotions and activities. While, for such defects, the man is more or less responsible, he may still in heart be true, not only to conscience, but to God. Indeed, if a man is true to the one, he must be true to the other. Such exceptions prove, rather than weaken, the rule that the first and great duty of man is to possess a religious character. It is a law of nature and of reason: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."

(1) To possess
a religious
character
which is
ethical.

The character is manifested and strengthened by appropriate special actions. These are threefold, — the intellectual, the emotional, and the external, — constituting three classes of duties; the will, the immediate agent of the dutiful or ethical choosing, being supposed to be present, and to animate and direct each and all of these forms of action.

§ 327. The intellectual duties, or duties of faith, are comprehended under the rule, that it is the duty of every man to possess correct, complete, and fixed religious opinions. All religious motives, as has been explained, are derived from faith in spiritual beings and truths. These truths do not touch the spirit, nor address the senses, except on infrequent and extraordinary occasions. Even if the one or the other or both were true, what is believed concerning religious objects must be asserted and assented to in the form of opinions or a creed. These truths are capable of an exhaustless variety of statement, argument and appeal. It is essential even to one's intellectual energy, that his religious creed should be held firmly, and, so far as he is a reasonable and thinking being, that it should be held rationally and wisely. So far as a man is uncertain and indefinite in his religious belief, so far is the power of his faith to control and animate his feelings and conduct weakened or destroyed. The entire destruction of an uttered and reasoned creed might not involve the absolute negation of religious faith, for the reason that one's latent and unexpressed belief may survive that assent which is the product and takes the form of reflection and logic: such a negative creed, however, must greatly weaken, if it does not wholly suspend the operation of religious motives, for the reason that the weakening of conscious intelligent assent involves the weakening of religious impulse and inspiration. The religious opinions should be correct, in order that the truth of motives should be represented; they should be complete, that these motives may be harmonious and well-rounded; and they

should be fixed, in order that they may act with the energy which is required.

§ 328. If the attainment and retention of faith are obligatory, it is also obligatory to use the means which are essential to these effects. The time, the thought, the reading and reflection, which may be demanded, should be expended with a conscientious spirit. Inasmuch also as the decision of questions of faith may be more or less affected by the inclinations and prejudices, these inquiries should be conducted in an honest and candid temper. Special care should be taken, that no biasing influences should withdraw the attention from any important evidence, or persuade to partial or one-sided views. When a conclusion is reached, it should be distinctly avowed to others in all self-respecting ways, in order that it may be positive for one's self and pledged to others. This is the more necessary if the profession of one's faith involves any sacrifice of reputation or social position, or discomfort. The general obligation to truth and manliness, to say nothing of special duties to one's self and to God, exacts this duty.

**Duty to use
the means
for this end.**

There are peculiar obligations which rest upon every man with respect to the religion in which he has been educated. The religious faith and opinions of every child and youth are necessarily formed at first by the teaching of others, and are founded very largely on the confidence which we give to our kinsfolk and friends. We say very largely, but not wholly; for whatever in our traditional faith is true, and is fitted to our nature as truth, will be responded to by the conscience even of a child, and even impart a sanction and sacredness to much that is erroneous and defective. As we grow older, we are necessarily summoned to the duty of justifying our faith to our reflective judgment. In doing this, we must revise this faith in the light of our maturer and more independent thinking. This process should be conducted with all the thoroughness possible, with all the aids which the community of believers can give, with all the critical suggestions which reason enforces, and with an honest and earnest desire to find and hold the truth.

**Special obligations in
the revision
of traditional
faith.**

Upon the issue of such an inquiry concerning one's faith, will depend the most important consequences to the moral life. Every man who thinks

must have a creed and a religion of some sort or other. Atheism, scepticism, agnosticism, all have a positive as truly as a negative side. What each man holds concerning the Unseen, must mould and animate, must elevate or depress, his moral life. Among all known religions, Christianity is distinguished for exacting, as the condition of human blessedness, a personal faith, the product of reason as illumined by divine guidance and help, which must be achieved by every individual for himself. Whether historical and supernatural Christianity be true or false, this doctrine of faith can never be shaken, and with it the obligation that rests upon every person in a Christian country, to appropriate to himself whatever spiritual force there is in its objective motives, and whatever energy lies in its subjective trust and hope. The great question, whether Christianity is from God, and what is its import as a motive power, should be met and decided by every man with a just appreciation of its ethical importance.

Earnestness and seriousness in forming and holding religious opinions are consistent with toleration and charity for those who differ from us. This is made to appear from the consideration, that the truth which corresponds to faith as a duty and a spiritual impulse is personal and concrete, rather than abstract and reflective. The creeds and theologies which are expressed in language are easily distinguished from the individual faiths of individual men. Men may agree in the substantial features of their personal faith, who differ in respect to the propositions in which this faith is expressed. For many purposes, creeds and systems are not only desirable but necessary; yet it should never be forgotten, that they are always subsidiary to personal belief. For this reason, those who differ in respect to symbols, more or less, should not only tolerate one another for reasons of fairness and courtesy, but from the higher motives of charity which thinketh no evil, and which is sufficiently enlightened to know that differences in intellectual assent are compatible with unity in living faith.

If these truths are kept in view, progress in the science of religion becomes not only a conscientious right, but a religious duty. The earnest study of religious and Christian truth becomes imperative under all the light which is certain to be shed upon God's relations to man by history, science, and philosophy. The use of this light for individual and social illumination becomes a sacred obligation enforced by conscience and by God.

§ 329. The duties of religious feeling are obligatory for two reasons. The first: religious emotions are the natural and necessary response to religious truth and religious motives. The second: religious motives and influences, being pre-eminently personal, act directly

**Possibility
and duty of
toleration
and charity.**

**Duties of
religious
feeling.**

upon the emotions; and therefore strong and warm emotions are properly required as the measure and evidence of religious fidelity. Indeed, faith in the religious and especially in the Christian sense of the term, is conceived as partly intellectual and partly emotional; blending the assent of the intellect with the consent of the heart. It involves definite and permanent convictions, and implies earnest and intense emotion.

The prominent forms of religious feeling are reverence, gratitude, penitence, trust, hope, peace, and joy. Hence these are all enjoined as positive duties. Inasmuch, Forms of religious feeling. however, as men differ very widely in respect to temperament and emotional habits, these differences are partly constitutional, and partly the results of inward and outward culture. No fixed standard of duty, or ideal of achievement, can be definitely conceived, or imposed upon all. Individuality in religious emotion should be most strenuously guarded and conceded, as the only security against cant and hypocrisy.

The exercise and culture of the religious affections is an indispensable and essential duty, for the reason that Duty of the same. it is through these emotions that religious truth holds and increases its power over the man. The emotions themselves are the most efficient of which man is capable. When thoroughly aroused and constantly sustained, they exclude and control every inferior affection. It is useless to contend against appetite and ambition and greed and indolence and pride, so long as no superior and warmer feeling takes their place. But the instant that any man yields his heart to the love and gratitude and hope which are ready to be kindled by the revelation of God and Christ and heaven, he has gained the victory. He has fulfilled the precept, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

§ 330. The duties of religious *action* are binding, because they are the natural and necessary manifestations of the purposes and emotions. As all actions Duties of religious activity.

should be impelled and controlled by religious motives, every act enforced by the conscience becomes a religious duty. As no intention or feeling can be regarded as complete until it has been expressed and embodied in word or look or deed, the obligation to purpose and feel includes the obligation to speak and look and act rightly. The doctrine so emphatically emphasized in the Christian ethics, that the heart is all in all, that the tree must be good if the fruit is to be good, has not infrequently been abused to excuse from external action, and even to sanction actions that are questionable, under the seemingly fair but actually foul casuistry that good intentions excuse or hallow injurious deeds. The security against, and the protection from, these perversions is to be found in the principle that the good tree must and will bring forth good fruit.

When we proceed to name and classify the religious duties, we find ourselves embarrassed by the truth, that, inasmuch as every act of duty is enforced by religious motives, it follows that every obligatory act is a religious duty. Whatsoever we do, we are commanded to do it "as unto the Lord." For the reasons already given, we limit ourselves to acts that are the expression and, so to speak, the completion, of some intention which is directly concerned with personal homage or emotion or honor to God. Such are the duties of professing our religious faith, of imparting it to others, and the expression of our emotions in the so-called acts of private and social worship by meditation, praise, and prayer.

§ 331. *To profess our faith*, is an act to which we are impelled by every right impulse from within, and from which we are restrained only by hostility or a want of sympathy on the part of others. To refrain from an act so natural and reasonable, is ignoble; being not only immoral but also unmanly, and hence an offence against conscience. Inasmuch, also, as the motives to fidelity are most imperative, the offence is most serious. It not only

**Duty of
professing
our faith.**

betrays weakness of principle, but it tends to weaken it. Hence the importance attached to the confession of one's faith, and the duty of doing this at the exposure or sacrifice even of life.

It is needful for others, also, that we not only confess our faith, but that we seek to impart it to others. If our faith is believed to be important or essential to ourselves, it is or may be equally needed by our fellow-men. Hence conscience bids us assert and defend and extend it, so far as we may, with an earnestness and zeal which are proportionate to the importance of the blessing which we seek to impart. Christianity assumes that its truths and motives are needed by men just in proportion to their indifference or unwillingness to believe and obey it. The duty of proclaiming it and defending it, of bringing men, if possible, to accept it as true and practically supreme, may often be measured by the intensity of this very indifference and dislike.

In professing and propagating our faith, as in the discharge of all duties, we are bound to use sound discrimination and wise expediency: our love for the truth "should abound with all judgment." We are neither commanded nor permitted to offend against good manners, or to be obtrusive or dogmatical or intolerant or censorious or impatient. "The servant of the Lord should not strive, but be gentle with all men," etc.

§ 332. *The duties of worship* have immediate respect to God. We owe and pay them directly to him. Inasmuch as we are made in his image as spiritual beings, Duties of
worship. and our thoughts and feelings are open to his inspection; inasmuch also as he has access to the inmost springs of our inner life, — we are capable of direct communication or spiritual intercourse with him in the ways of praise and gratitude, and confession and petition. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

Worship is twofold,—the worship of reverent and grateful recognition, and the worship of petition. Both of these are obligatory in external acts, for somewhat different reasons.

Worship proper, or reverence, is the natural reflection or re-action of a right-hearted soul, in view of the mystery and majesty, the moral perfection and the tender love, of God. The exercise of these emotions has been explained as obligatory. The expression of them in act is that spontaneous and natural tribute to God as we think of him and feel towards him, which no right-hearted person would choose to withhold, or fail to express. Whether the utterance be in private, in the seclusion of personal communion with the Father who seeth in secret; or in public, under the inspiration of social song and praise,—worship is a duty, and none the less because it is a privilege from which the right-hearted man cannot refrain. The cant and formalism which often characterize the worship of the uncultivated in no sense excuse, how far soever they may explain, the indifference or contempt of the over-cultured practical atheist, whether he worships appetite or culture or himself in the place of the Father of his spirit. Private worship is a simple due which every man is impelled to render to God.

Social worship is equally spontaneous from men as members of a community who recognize their common relations to God, and thereby recognize one another as his creatures and children. Men who are right-hearted toward themselves and toward one another can never join hands in brotherhood without spontaneously lifting them to heaven, and uttering the common prayer, “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.” The instant they do this, they become a church in spirit; and, recognizing the new social bond that holds them together, they add to their prayer, “Thy kingdom come.” This involves a recognition of the church in some sort, or an organized religious community, with

Social worship and the church.

institutions and days and seasons for worship ; all of which, if not enforced by any positive revelation or authority, would come into being by the spontaneous impulses of a common relationship to God.¹

We do not discuss here the nature or authority of the Christian Church, nor the obligation to observe the Lord's Day, nor the sacredness or authority of any other scriptural institution : we simply assert the duty of social worship as enforced by every man's conscience when confronted with the sight or presence of God.

The expression of the religious emotions in acts and institutions of worship has a most important indirect **Importance of worship.** influence on the future of an individual and the community. This circumstance enhances the obligation to the performance of this class of duties. The neglect or non-exercise of outward religious manifestations involves sloth and torpor in the sensibilities themselves. If worship and gratitude are withheld, the sensual and selfish impulses and emotions which these higher impulses are fitted to exclude and restrain are certain to control the man. They connect themselves with all the associations and actions. They are inwrought into the habits, and attain an unnatural strength and predominance ; while the superior impulses are dwarfed in their capacity, or are ignominiously overlooked and neglected. If nothing worse follows, the man disuses his noblest feelings ; and the capacity to call them into quick and active exercise dwindles into feebleness. Such a man practically renounces his birthright, by failing, by acts and habits of worship, to recognize his inheritance of immortality and his kinship with God.

To worship in the forms of praise and gratitude, is as natural for man as it is to breathe. In this natural worship as a senti-

¹ This obligation involves in some sense the recognition of the Church as an organized institution, which has equal importance and permanence with the family and the state, but which, for obvious reasons, we do not include within the plan of this treatise.

ment, and as expressed by word or act, there is not of necessity any virtue. To be a duty, it must have an ethical or spiritual significance, and be sustained by a righteous character and life. Of such a life, such worship is the bright and consummate flower. In every case, however, the neglect of worship as felt or expressed is a token of moral evil, and a certain method of confirming such evil.

§ 333. By *prayer*, in the special sense of the word, we mean
Of worship petition for spiritual or physical benefits. The im-
as prayer. pulse to ask for benefits of both kinds is strong in the uncultured mind; and it is sometimes irresistible, under the experience of a great necessity, even with those who persuade themselves that to ask, hoping to receive any thing of God, is irrational and unscientific. In cooler moments, however, and under the pressure of scientific discovery, the reign of law seems to threaten to take complete possession of the universe of matter and of spirit, and to subject every event to a rigid necessity which its Author can not or will not break. Men usually find less difficulty in believing that God is able to give good spiritual gifts to those who ask him, than that he can direct material agencies to special issues in answer to petitions from men. If we consider the two kinds of benefits apart, we find that under spiritual benefits are comprehended all conceivable effects in the human spirit,—the intellectual
Possibility of and emotional as truly as the ethical and religious.
spiritual
influences. Effects of this sort, to the ordinary consciousness, seem to obey no law: they are spontaneous if not capricious. Excepting the voluntary, which are designedly removed from any influence or control on the part of God, the remainder are not so obviously controlled by necessary agencies as to exclude the control and direction of God in answer to the petitions of men. Many persons who cannot believe that the petitions of men can have any influence within the domain of matter will consent that God *can* move on the spirit of man without interfering with the independence of the individual will or the fixed-

ness of spiritual laws. The magic sympathy and power which one person exerts over another, the strange likings and mislikings which often appear in human affections, and awaken unexpected impulses to action, the singular and mysterious invasion of unanticipated images and thoughts, suggest many reasons why God might be supposed to inspire and move to manifold thoughts and purposes' such as, without such aid or influence, would never be experienced. For these reasons, most scientific theists will consent that God may possibly answer the petitions of men by spiritual aid and blessing.

But when the question concerns physical effects or phenomena, the objections, at first thought, seem to be insuperable. Material forces are fixed in their operation by unchanging laws: they are so correlated to one another, and (so to speak) so constantly proceeding in and out from one another, that to suppose the quantity of force to be changed an iota, or a single law to be slighted or set aside, is to abandon science, and to render experience impossible. Prayer that is petition, it is argued, cannot be a physical force; that is, as the proposition is understood, prayer cannot produce or prevent the occurrence of any event to which physical agencies are proximate. The phrase "physical force" when used in such a connection is obviously ambiguous. It may mean a force which is itself only physical, or it may signify a force which makes itself manifest or effective by changes and effects that are only material. Thinking or feeling or choice, as exercised by men, except on the theory of the materialist, are not physical but psychical forces; and yet, in the daily experience of myriads of human beings, they control and alter manifold physical phenomena, so far at least as the movements of both mind and body are concerned. They disturb and alter the correlations of purely physical agents, evoking agencies which without them would never have appeared, and preventing others from occurring. More than this is true: not only do they affect physical phenomena in human and

Is prayer a
physical
force?
Objection.

animal bodies, but through them they alter the very “course of nature” itself by changes in forests and streams; drying or flooding fertile plains, one or both, by destroying villages, and sweeping cities into the sea.

If a spiritual force, when intimately connected with matter, can accomplish physical changes like these, what shall we say of the capacity of the Eternal Spirit to effect many more and vastly greater changes, if indeed he is not more nearly related to the forces of nature than the human spirit is to the body? He would be a rash man who would deny that He who created and upholds these forces by his immanent and upholding power, may so manifest, direct, and combine them as to accomplish any physical effect which he pleases, in answer to prayer, in entire consistency with the laws which he has imposed upon them.

It is important, however, to distinguish the existence of a force and its laws, from the occurrence of a phenomenon or the production of an effect. We might even assert, that though the forces of the physical universe and their laws have never changed from the beginning, and even while not a particle of matter has been destroyed, the effect of these forces in their combined action has never been in any two instants precisely the same. Forces and laws may continually repeat themselves, and the phenomena which constitute these effects may never be alike. The fixedness of the agencies which are employed by God in the conduct of the universe commands the confidence of men. The variety of the results, and the wisdom manifested in their production, compel their admiration.

§ 334. There is no condition of life, and no circumstances,

Prayer appropriate to every condition of life. under which it is not the duty of men to ask for the benefits which they desire, hoping to receive them. Prayer in the form of petition, as well as in the form of worship, is also a most important duty.

The arrangement by which the reception of blessings of every sort is made dependent upon prayer is most worthy of God, and

most beneficent to man. It brings and holds man to his appropriate place, with respect to his Father in heaven, in the constant recognition of his dependence, in gratitude for favors received, in hope that what he seeks may be gained for the asking, and in filial submission to the divine wisdom should the blessing be denied.

Where the last element is not present, the true spirit of prayer is absent. Dictation to the Supreme, under the fair guise of what is called importunity, is incompatible with the temper which qualifies man to pray at all. Confidence that the particular blessing asked for will be given, though disguised under the name of the assurance of faith, goes beyond the terms of any promise and the reasonableness of any inference. Earnestness, minuteness, fervor, frequency in petitions, are all enforced by nature and the Scriptures; but dictation and assurance are most offensive to the conscience, and may become insidious and degrading sins. All needed rules for prayer are provided; and every difficulty is met by the spirit of the direction, "When ye pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven." The authority for employing petitions for good is ample in the words: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Submission
essential to
prayer.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain, both by night and day;
For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

TENNYSON.

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